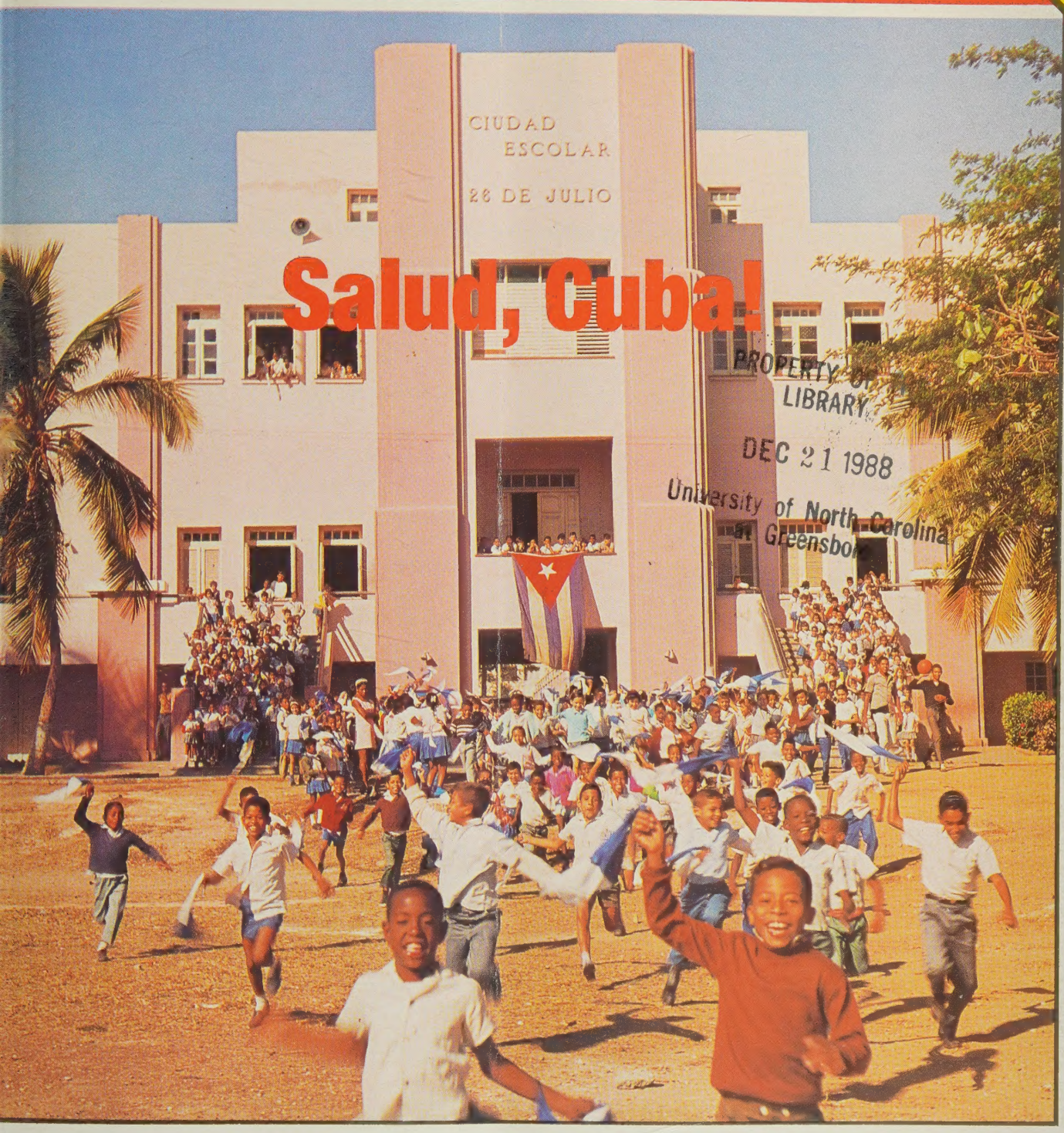
No. 49
DECEMBER 1988

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Mayakovsky in Paris



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U.S. congressmen on human rights

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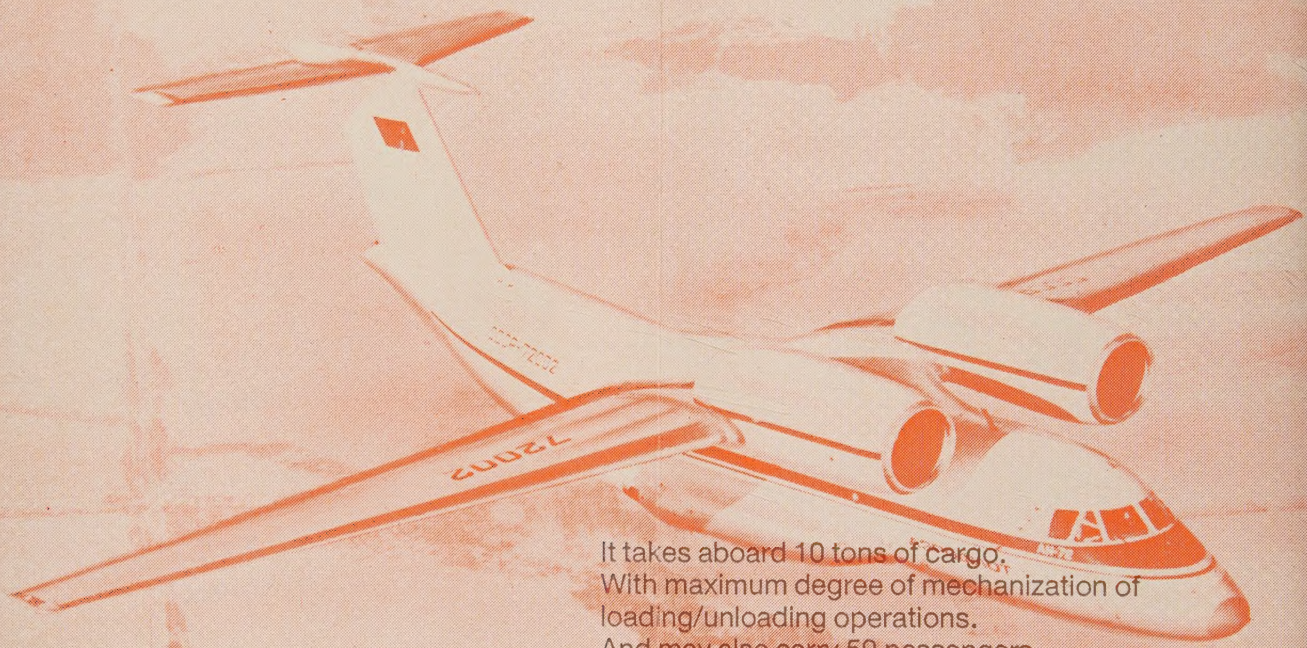

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NEW TIMES

No. 49, December 1988

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American Congressmen and Soviet public figures of the Commission for International Cooperation on Humanitarian Problems and Human Rights gathered in the New Times editorial office to discuss foreign travel restrictions, "prisoners of conscience" and psychiatric abuses.

See p. 26

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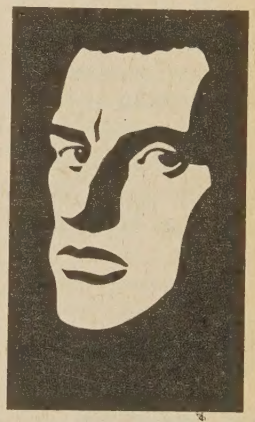

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CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

Andrei Fyodorov
Krasnoyarsk, U.S.S.R.

■ I am prompted to write to you by George Newman's letter from the United States (issue 42). It sems to me that his idea of setting up American-Soviet work camps should not be put on ice. In my opinion, it is an entirely voluntary project, and no instructions or decrees from above are needed to put it into effect. Everything must be absolutely simple: a written or verbal confirmation of the desire to take part in the project, and an indication of the speciality in which a person wants to work.

In this way several groups can be formed at a time. They will simultaneously build houses in both countries, study problems of education and public health, and so on. In developing countries, food supplies could also be one of the problems tackled jointly by such groups. The project could initially be financed through donations. but later it should, of course, be a self-paying concern.

OPINIONS

Alexei Kurganov
Moscow Region, U.S.S.R.

■ It was with great interest that I read Victor Israelyan's article "Vyshinsky and his die-hard diplomacy," in issue 41. Vyshinsky's activities as prosecutor have been adequately dealt with. However, nothing had been written until recently about his time as Soviet ambassador to the United Nations. The article is especially valuable in that its author worked in the Foreign Ministry at the time and had first-hand experience of Vyshinsky in the post of Foreign Minister.

How odd that a man who, before the revolution, signed a writ for the arrest of Lenin, should have become, in the postwar years, head of a department that was, on the basis of Lenin's principles, to represent our country in the world arena.

I do not want to stoop so low as to use Vyshinsky's favourite expressions, "mad dogs," "vile creatues," and so on, and therefore I shall use a less emotive phrase: Vyshinsky was a toady and, it should be said, a loyal toady to Stalin. Time shows the true role one or other figure played in history. This applies to both tyrants and their lackeys.

Nikolai Kadochkin,
worker, Novlyanskoye village, Ivanovo region, U.S.S.R.

■ I want, through your magazine, to thank the people of South Korea for the pleasure I experienced during the 24th Olympic Games and for the excellent preparations for the Olympiad. Watching sporting events on television and reading articles about them in New Times and other magazines and newspapers, I thought how good it was that, disregarding all political, ideological and other factors, people were able to meet on Korean soil and hold that wonderful festival of peace and sport.

I very much hope our government will establish relations with South Korea, perhaps not now, but in the future. I think this should be done, first of all for the maintenance of universal and lasting peace.

When IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch presented a gold Olympic chain to the head of the South Korean Organizing Committee, I thought it would be a good thing if the IOC instituted an Order of Coubertin, in memory of the great Frenchman who revived these splendid games for the whole of mankind.

Enzo Proverbio
Milan, Italy

■ Over the last ten years interest in politics has been diminishing consistently in Italy and other capitalist countries. This process has affected all parties: their memberships are declining, fewer and fewer people go to the polls and take part in demonstrations and meetings. Politics is becoming more and more removed from people's daily needs. As a result, they cease to associate their own interests with one or other political choice.

It seems to me that in Italy and other countries people were most actively involved in public life during the Second World War, in the early postwar years and in the student actions of 1968. Then came a slump, and bureaucracy prevailed. The problems of unemployment and social injustice have been exacerbated further.

That is why I read with interest the articles about perestroika your magazine is now carrying in each issue. In my opinion, perestroika is necessary in Italy too, perhaps even more than in the Soviet Union.

A MATTER AT ISSUE

Vladimir Kuznetsov,
teacher, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

■ I found issue 43 very interesting and informative, especially Boris Grushin's article "Scientist's dilemma." The author quoted a leading Moscow sociologist as saying that sociologists are rather like an academic council under Genghiz Khan. It is an apt observation, all the more so as it does not apply exclusively to sociologists. There are no longer any Genghiz Khans, of course. But does it change the essence of the matter if in our days too, a given institution is dominated by one individual and completely depends on him?

Vladimir Pakhomov
Omsk, U.S.S.R.

■ I learned from an ad in your Russian-language issue 41 that Political Book Publishers offers a new book, "Glorious path. The story of Kliment Voroshilov" by V.D. Uspensky, put out in the "Ardent Revolutionaries" series. I think readers are well informed about Voroshilov, and the publication of the book is not therefore in the spirit of the times. The time has come to write and put out books about genuine revolutionaries – Leninists who were victimized during the Stalin personality cult. Then a full picture of our achievements and grim past will be restored.

GLASNOST

CARRYING ON THE DISCUSSION

Alexander Chusovskoy,
ecturer, Yakutsk,
U.S.S.R.

■ Your magazine, to which I have subscribed for a long ime, has always been infor-native, and it has recently be-come instructive as well. For s readers New Times is not a eyhole but a wide open win-low on the world. That's very ood, but, by way of criticism, want to put a question to you: s it enough for a political agazine merely to be a ource of information, how-ver critical and interesting? an the editors express their wn views about polemical ar-cles? For it is one thing to ublish them and quite nother to comment on them.

I understand, of course, that e publication of an article an be an act of support for e views expressed in it. But ot always. In the atmosphere f glasnost the magazine car-es opinions the editors may ot agree with. Perhaps con-troversial articles (for instance, the interview with Academician Sakharov in issue 38) should be accompanied by editorial comment.

From the editors. You are probably right. Some controversial articles could be followed by editorial comment on them. We believe, however, that today readers are sufficiently well-informed to make their own evaluation of the problem. Besides, we are anxious not to impose limits on the discussion.

Rodolfo Sanchez
Santa Clara, Cuba

■ Our press has reported on events in Nagorny Karabakh, and I hoped to see a profound analysis in your magazine. But it gives very little information. You seem to be holding something back even in what you publish, and I don't understand why. If it is a delicate issue, it should be examined thoroughly, and the magazine should carry information for those who are not familiar with the roots of the problem. Such a position runs counter to our idea of the present-day Soviet press – free of taboos and prepared to hold an honest and truthful dialogue with its readers.

There are also other subjects that are virtually ignored in Soviet press and widely featured in the West. I have in mind in particular subjects still topical today: the erection of the Berlin Wall, the events of 1956 in Hungary, and the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia.

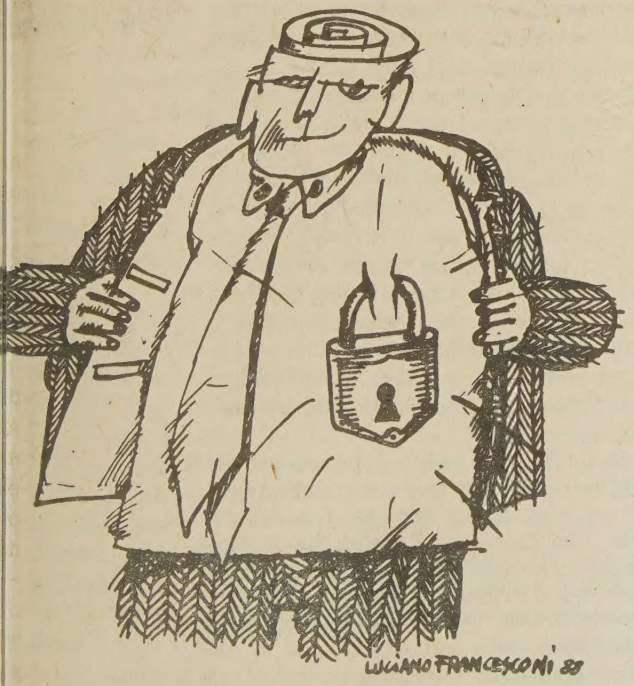
Alexei Popkov
Chelyabinsk, U.S.S.R.

■ At a time when perestroika is in its infancy we must radically and, I would even say, in a revolutionary way, expand and intensify our contacts with ordinary Americans and citizens of other capitalist countries. I am sure that unrestricted two-way travel is the best way of achieving complete mutual trust. Perhaps complete trust will make nonsense of the state secrets that today restrict mutual contacts.

Roberto Luchetti
Milan, Italy

■ I learned about a beauty contest in Moscow from your issue No. 27. You, too, have at last fallen prey to bourgeois folly. I have always considered shows of this kind a departure from moral principles. A beautiful woman is regarded as an object, and her personality is ignored. I would like to know what plain women think about these contests, or women who have no opportunity to look after themselves, because they are preoccupied with daily chores, their work or concern for their children.

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT



Drawing by Luciano Francesconi (Italy)

GLASNOST

Dieter Voss
Magdeburg,
German Democratic Republic

■ Some of Simon Soloveichik's articles come as a shocking revelation to me. Is it possible that your educational system has not justified itself and has even deteriorated? I don't understand why schoolchildren are compelled to wear uniform. Children are personalities, they also have their opinions and ideas, and we should respect them.

I think it is now necessary to hold a congress of teachers in your country, and delegate to it only those teaches whose work is progressive and who do not look down on children. The decision to convene such a forum has been taken. But will such teachers be able to attend it? Advanced instructors in different methods and specialists in various subjects, especially physics, computer technology and information science, should take part in such a congress. It is also necessary to work out new, more up-to-date study programmes and principles for united action by all teachers against hack work. Otherwise, who will formulate and develop the ideas of perestroika in some years' time? Such is my proposal, and I am addressing it to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

PRIVATE OPINION

VLADIMIR LIKHACHEV deputy of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, team leader at the Lebedinsky ore-dressing mill, Belgorod Region

The 12th session of the Supreme Soviet is an event not only in my own life but in the life of the entire country. The draft laws on constitutional amendments and on the election of people's deputies are landmarks in our history. What am I concenred about most of all? What do I expect of the new laws? To put it in a nutshell, I want to live and work in a climate of genuine democracy, mutual assistance and friendship. The new procedure for electing people's deputies is a major step towards this goal.

JOAN RUDDOCK, MP, Labour Party, Britain

I spent several days in the Soviet Union as a member of a delegation from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. In the discussions with people from the Soviet Peace Committee and academic institutes we pointed out that the disarmament process in Europe was actually beginning to slow down. The INF treaty has not been followed by new initiatives, which we very much deplore. Mrs Thatcher is pushing other NATO countries for the modernization of nuclear weapons. This means that the weapons we have lost in Britain under the INF agreement will come back in a more deadly form.

How to give an impulse to disarmament? In Moscow, we shared our ideas with other people who are also concerned about this question. We very much enjoyed the openness we had in our discussions. I have understood what glasnost and perestroika mean in a real sense, and we were impressed by a diversity of opinions in the Soviet Union. I think unilateral measures are needed at the present stage to get disarmament off the ground. We don't want to see Mr Gorbachev, while in London, talking only to our Prime Minister on questions of security. We would like him to say once more to the British people that he is for a vision of a Europe without nuclear weapons.

LEV RAZGON, writer, veteran member of the Communist Party

The wailing wall... I am going to talk not about the ancient stone wall in far-off Jerusalem, but about the "wall" in Moscow, still bleeding and making people bewail the loss of their near ones. The "wall" was erected in the Palace of Culture of the Moscow electric bulb mill, where a "week of conscience" – a week of remembrance of the victims of Stalinism – was held from November 19 to 26 on the initiative of the magazine Ogonyok and other periodicals and public organizations.

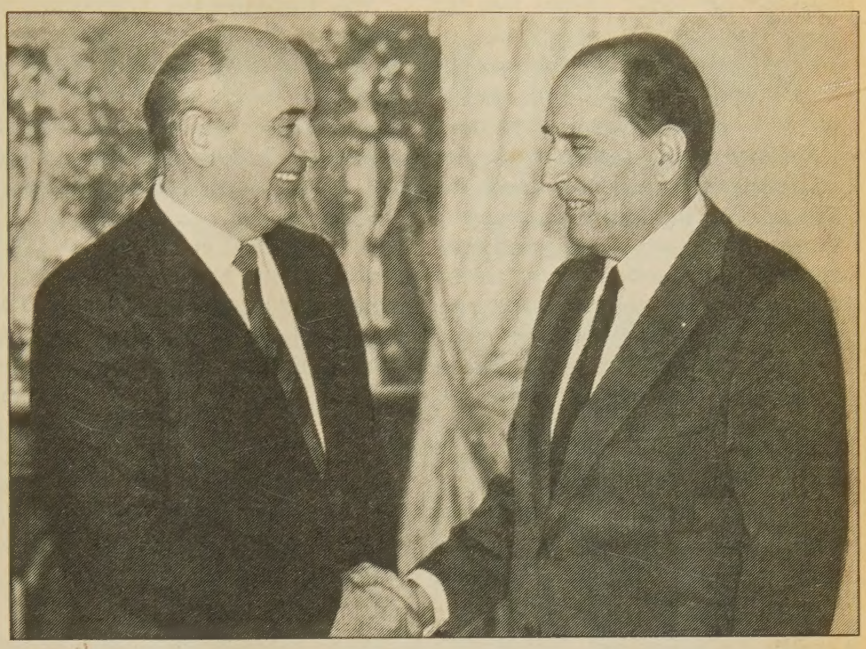
The capacity meetings were addressed by prominent writers and journalists and leading figures in public life. But there is no need to give an account of the speeches delivered by these people, because we know them well and their articles appear regularly in the press. I was impressed most not by their passionate, indignant and accusing speeches but by what I called the "wailing wall."

In the spacious foyer of the Palace of Culture the wall was covered with photographs and original documents of every kind: rehabilitation notices and death certificates and mendacious replies to inquiries made by close relatives of the convicted. There were also plenty of photographs of comparatively young and elderly people, some with their children or brides or wives, smiling and sad, as if they sensed what was to happen to them.

Almost all of them are dead, shot in prison basements, in inaccessible ravines or in the remotest depths of the hills. Some of them died of hunger and hard labour in the goldfields of Kolyma, in the northern taiga, or in uranium mines. Despair and hope cry out from the questions written on pieces of paper: "Did you see my mother in Butyrki or Lefortovo (prisons)?" Did you hear anything of my father – he was in Kolyma?" People looked closely at the papers and photographs in the vain hope of finding their relatives, and they wept because it was a strange and dreadful wall, the only monument to date to the victims of Stalinism, at which they could bewail the loss of their dear and near ones.

People lined up early in the morning to get into the foyer and to look at the "wailing wall" for at least a few minutes. Leaving the Palace of Culture and seeing the endless stream of people, I realized how strong was their desire to preserve the memory of millions of victims, fine sons and daughters of the nation, who had disappeared in unknown graves on the vast expanses of our country.

The working visit paid to the U.S.S.R. by President François Mitterrand of France was not marked by the signing of too many documents. Should we, however, assess the result of the visit from this angle alone?



The Moscow summit begins

Symbols and realities

A penchant for symbols is, I think, one of the traits our two peoples' national characters have in common. This inclination, excessive sometimes, manifests itself in a number of events, world political developments included. So if a Soviet-French summit does not culminate in a bulky formal treaty or in an unheard-of move, some are apt to regard the meetings as all but a failure.

Symbols do play their role, of course. They mean especially much to the Western public which is used to a sensational presentation of events. This time, too, they have been very much in evidence. Take, for instance, the landing on the Baikonur cosmodrome of the Concorde supersonic jet which brought President Mitterrand and his party to the Soviet Union. Or the press conference given by the French leader in the holy of holies – the assembly and test block – next to spaceships under construction. Or his presence at the second Soviet-French crew setting off for the Mir orbital station on a long mission.

Nevertheless, let's not go in for symbols too much, and take a sober-minded look at the results of the Moscow rendezvous instead. I have the impression that some of them only take us back to the late seventies. For instance, the two Presidents decided to meet annually; well, an agreement to that effect had already been reached before but proved short-lived.

The past decade was actually wasted, and the "special" relations the two capitals had maintained for 15 years lost. Writing in the previous issue of New Times, Andrei Kudryavtsev explained in considerable detail the causes of our relations having become strained. I would only add the following to his comments.

The fact that the two leaders were out of touch did not merely bring the over standard of Soviet-French relations down. It largely detracted from mutual understanding and, what's worse, had an adverse effect on cooperation, so much so that now a fresh start is to be made. Getting Soviet-French cooperation under way again was precisely what the President himself, the seven ministers who accompanied him, and a whole group of businessmen, financiers and experts concentrated on during the November visit.

Mutual attraction remains, no doubt. There is ample evidence of that, and not only at the official level, either. I think it's time more scope was given for personal and professional contacts, for the initiatives of individual organizations and groups. The Soviet side now offers many more opportunities for that. Take, for instance, the arrival in Moscow in mid-November of 80 representatives of Paris elite as part of the Initiative Paris-Moscow. Among them I saw university professors and prominent scientists, municipal councillors and syndicalists, Catholic priests and celebrated men of letters. Most of them sought new contacts, predominantly personal ones.

And here is another example. Various new organizations – cooperatives and self-supporting art unions among them – regularly contribute to the U.S.S.R.-France Association their own plans for the promotion of links with France. To the best of my knowledge, at least three associations of this kind are already at work including the agent firm called INISOFR (Soviet-French Initia-

tive) set up by enterprising young commercialists and journalists. It was the filling of our interrelationships with such tangible and varied content that the two leaders called for in Moscow.

Mikhail Gorbachev and François Mitterrand talked for seven hours discussing many crucial problems of the day.

Security and disarmament. Far from being divided on these issues, the Soviet Union and France are prepared to take joint action on them and even agree on the priorities. Having voiced their gratification over the INF treaty, the participants of the Soviet-French dialogue emphasized special importance of the talks now in progress on halving nuclear strategic arms while observing the ABM treaty and refraining from the militarization of outer space. This explains why Paris declined, thanks to President Mitterrand's firmness, to cooperate with the Americans in preparing "star wars."

Whereas until very recently the French government has stayed away from a number of diplomatic forums on disarmament, now we see a change of course. The President's statement at the Institute of Higher Studies of National Defence has not passed unnoticed in Moscow. "No action capable of interfering with the current advance towards disarmament ought to be taken," he said. "It doesn't befit France to complicate the present situation."

Paris has initiated (on the Western side) progress in chemical disarmament by asking all the interested states over to the international conference to be held there next January. Its purpose is to retrieve from oblivion the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning chemical weapons, to update this document and to help make the chemical disarmament negotiations, now on in Geneva, a success.

We hold similar or identical views on the issue of conventional weapons in Europe the discussion of which is to start later this year following the completion of the Vienna meeting of the 35 states participating in the Helsinki process. Both sides are prepared to eliminate disbalances and asymmetries. What's more, the French suggest that the already existent weapons should not be built up further for a certain while so as to give diplomats of 23 WTO and NATO member states a chance to succeed – in cooperation with 12 neutral and non-aligned states. In the both presidents' opinion the main thing is to bring the Vienna meeting to the earliest possible completion.

The humanitarian conference in Moscow. The completion of the Vienna forum involves solving a number of problems among which humanitarian ones are given special prominence by the Western press. Criticism is levelled, in particular, against Moscow's suggestion that a conference on the subject be held in Moscow in 1991, following the conferences in Paris (1989) and Copenhagen (1990). The Kremlin negotiations have gone to show that the U.S.S.R. and France are all for a dialogue in this sphere. As the French President put it, the dialogue should promote "rapprochement diplomacy" rather than "the-worse-the-better policy," "help prevent new quarrels" and "create favourable conditions" for progress...

Such a cooperation calls for an equal attitude to all the participants of the all-European process. All the more so since Moscow pays great attention to the humanitarian sphere – one of the central objects of perestroika now under way in the Soviet Union. Francois Mitterrand noted the obvious changes in the Soviet Union welcomed by the French public. As we see, both politics and the "geographical fairness" principle (two forums in the West, one in the East) demand that all the three discussions be held.

Our common European home. As he dwelt on this subject, François Mitterrand vigorously backed the Soviet concept. A common Europe must be built despite its present division – such was the conclusion of the Moscow meeting. This is quite a feasible task, and the problems connected with it are wide-ranging and bear upon the interests of not just our two states alone: environmental protection, biology and medicine, climatic changes... The President of France suggested that we get down to "furnishing" the home without delay, and that the first item to be installed be a common "TV set" – meaning the high-resolution television system now being developed in Western Europe.

Bilateral relations. These relations have been criticized the most, perhaps, by both sides. Indeed, although France is our fourth biggest trade partner, the volume, structure and dynamics of Soviet-French trade cannot possibly satisfy either side. France purchases 17 billion francs' worth of goods from the U.S.S.R. while selling it only 10 billion francs' worth of products. The expansion of trade exchanges comes up against a multitude of barriers: the sale of 300 Soviet export items is restricted by the French quantitatively, there exist the notorious COCOM proscription lists. French businessmen fail to take advantage of the new situation taking shape in our country: they have invested in only six of the 130 joint enterprises we have formed with French companies.

It was decided at the Moscow summit to work out an entirely new concept of economic, scientific and technological cooperation and to draw up a concrete programme for its development over the period of up to the year 2000. In order to impart greater dynamism to cooperation and to extend it to new spheres of acitivity, the sides will exchange a number of visits, including those at ministers' level, within the next few months.

Conceptual groundwork has been laid for a number of major agreements to be prepared for the next stage – Mikhail Gorbachev's official visit to France in the first half of 1989. These are going to be agreements on the promotion of cultural, trade, economic, scientific and technological contacts; on the protection of capital investments; on youth exchanges; on allowing mutual access to the archives; on preventing accidents at sea outside territorial waters.

To sum up, the November talks have demonstrated the ability of Moscow and Paris to combine global reflections on world problems with practical approaches to concrete problems of today. There is still a great deal to do to bring about a real breakthrough – and more symbols like the ones mentioned at the beginning of this story.

Alexander Ignatov

TASS photo

From the Mir to the Hermès

A spaceship with the Soviet cosmonauts Alexander Volkov and Sergei Krikalev and their French colleague Jean-Loup Chrétien on board lifted off from Baikonur cosmodrome on November 26.

This is the second Soviet-French space mission intended to make our cooperation in space research still closer. On November 28, Soyuz TM-7 docked with the Mir orbital complex smoothly. Our special correspondent interviewed the spacemen and mission organizers shortly before the blast-off.

Alexander Volkov:

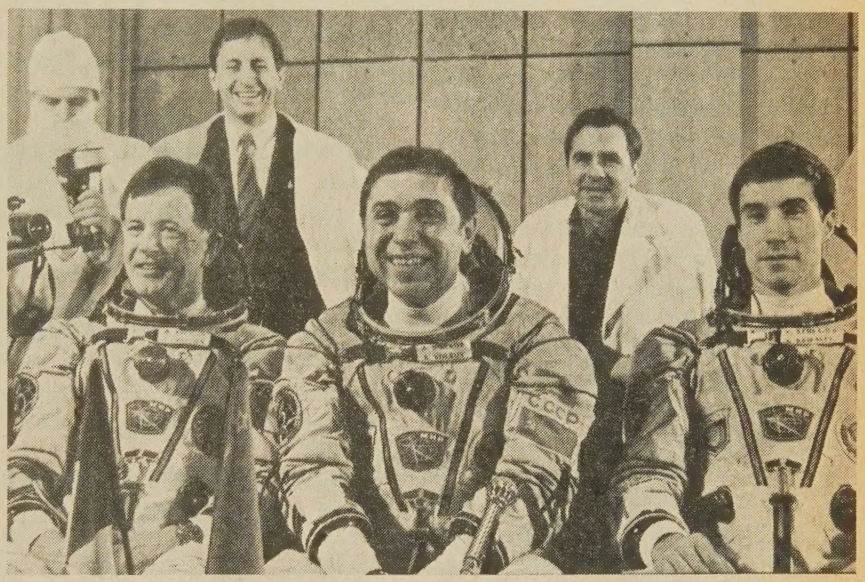
"The first stage of the mission wil be rather unusual, with six cosmonauts on board at a time; it is important to polish their teamwork to perfection. Joint research will be done in the form of a series of major experiments which can be roughly divided into medico-biological and technological ones.

"The Soviet-French mission is to be completed on December 21. On that day the transport will bring back to earth the cosmonauts Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov, who will have spent a year in orbit by then, and the French cosmonaut. Valery Polyakov, the physician who has been on board the station for three months now, will remain with those who are to carry the mission on."

What does the new space experiment mean to the French?

Jean-Loup Chrétien:

"We regard the new joint mission as an extension of the research jobs we started in 1982, on the first flight. Against the background of Soviet space marathons a month's stay in orbit may seem nothing much, but this flight is of great importance to us. The schedule of the mission provides, among other things, for extravehicular work – specifically, for rigging a six-metre-tall articulated frame which can be used to bear solar-cell panels or some other elements. No West European country has any experience of such activity yet. I am certain that in a decade or so, when Western Europe builds spacecraft of its own, we shall have to carry out operations like this.



The international crew of the Soyuz TM-7 before the lift-off. Left to right: researcher cosmonaut Jean-Loup Chrétien (France), mission commander Alexander Volkov, Pilot Cosmonaut of the U.S.S.R., and flight engineer Sergei Krikalev.
TASS photo

"This time we are going to add technological research jobs to medico-biological experiments. Some of these jobs are of entirely new kind and of interest to the industry as well as to science. France has a hand in implementing several space research programmes as it cooperates with the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. within the framework of the European Space Agency. The U.S. has an experience in Shuttle flights, while our cooperation with the U.S.S.R. enables us to work on board such spaceships as the Mir which are prototypes of the large orbital stations to come. In developing our own Hermès recoverable spaceship we benefit much from the current space research projects in which we take part – not by copying our partners' technologies but by gaining an experience in crew training."

...Jean-Loup Chrétien first arrived in the U.S.S.R. eight years ago. As he prepared for his first flight, he made many friends in the Stars' City, and spent his leisure time playing Bach and Beethoven on a small electric harmonium... This time, Jean-Loup Chrétien has also brought a harmonium along.

Jean-Loup Chrétien:

"I'd like to take the instrument to orbit with me, but this mission is going to be a long one and therefore we need five to six times more equipment than usual. The 'boot' is crammed full and, unfortunately, there is no room for the harmonium left. I considered sending the instrument up by the cargo transport before our lift-off, but then changed my mind because there was no way of getting it back to earth. And, anyway, there is a tape recorder on board the orbital station to provide all the music I want."

I must say, though, that Jean-Loup Chrétien underestimated his colleagues. They did manage to squeeze the harmonium into the instrument-packed cabin of the Soyuz TM-7 spaceship. So before very long we shall probably enjoy organ-music concerts to be given in orbit... Many wonder, I'm sure, why has Jean-Loup Chrétien been

chosen for the Soviet-French space mission again. It must have been a psychological strain on his back-up, Michel Tognini, to know all along that hard as he practised for the flight, he would be left behind. We put these questions to Lieutenant General Vladimir Shatalov (Air Force), the chief of the Soviet Space Training Centre.

Vladimir Shatalov:

"The main reason is that Jean-Loup Chrétien already spent ten days in space and felt fine during and after the flight. That largely qualified him for a long-term mission. We can rest assured that the cosmonaut will perform at his best both inside and outside the station when it comes to extravehicular work. We know from the record of space missions that not all the spacemen bear zero gravity equally well. The third crew of the American Skylab orbital station, for instance, couldn't work at all throughout its first week in space and asked ground control to 'leave it alone.' In 1969, the American astronaut Russel Schweickart felt so bad he couldn't go out of his Apollo-9 spaceship for a space walk and asked for a few days' delay of the experiment.

"Another reason why we don't want a replacement for Chrétien is connected with our plans for future experiments. The back-up crew comprises Michel Tognini, a Frenchman, and two Soviet cosmonauts – Alexander Serebrov and Alexander Viktorenko. On the next mission they are to test individual extravehicular spacecraft. This job calls for experienced cosmonauts who have already been to space. Both of the above-mentioned Soviet cosmonauts answer this demand, while in the main crew there is a man on his first space mission – I mean Sergei Krikalev.

"As for the French back-ups, another space hopeful, Patrick Boudry, was put through the pre-flight training procedure alongside Jean-Loup Chrétien on the first occasion. Later he trained in Houston and took part in an American Shuttle mission. France is now busy developing a reusable spaceship of its own, the Hermès. We do not rule out the prospect of the Hermès docking, in the long run, with the Mir orbital complex or some other station. Presumably, such international programmes will provide for exchanges of delegations, transfers from station to station and joint research work on board the stations. Michel Tognini may well become a participant of such an expedition..."

What about prospects?

Alexander Volkov:

"After the Soviet-French mission is completed, the cosmonauts remaining on board the Mir will carry on the research effort. They will take two walks in space so as to mount new solar attitude-control pickups on the station's exterior. In the concluding stage of the mission, the Mir orbital complex is to dock with the so-called accessory module. Using manipulators, this 20-ton module – actually a space station in its own right – will manoeuvre itself into alignment with one of the Mir's side coupling assemblies. The crew will reactivate the module and connect it to the orbital complex's service lines, whereupon a number of complicated but interesting technological jobs will be done..."

A space flight includes financial as well as technical problems.

Alexander Dunayev, chief of the Glavkosmos of the U.S.S.R.:

"That's right. We have carried out some 50 major projects in 22 years of Soviet-French space cooperation, and are now embarking on new nine exciting avenues of research. Until now joint space research jobs have been done on a non-pay basis. Now, as we go self-supporting, we have become more particular about money matters. The Soviet side estimates the total cost of the French cosmonaut's participation in the mission at about 21 million dollars. We have agreed with France on it meeting only part of these expenses. The French side has remunerated the cervices rendered it by our visiting experts as part of preparations for the flight. The French-supplied research instruments intended for the Mir will remain on board to be used by other crews. At our estimate, this will make up for a mere 10 per cent of the Soviet side's expenses. So it would be no exaggeration to say that the Soviet side has charged the French practically nothing for taking their cosmonaut on this mission."

It goes without saying that cooperation in space research helps both France and the U.S.S.R. to deal with many pressing problems more efficiently. The French business quarters, for instance, would like to take advantage of the chances space research offers for the development of biotechnology. Relevant negotiations are now in progress at the Glavkosmos of the U.S.S.R. The exploration of the planet Mars, asteroids and other objects of the solar system calls for large stations and high-power rockets found in the Soviet Union. This adds a whole new dimension to close cooperation between the two countries. French and Soviet experts point out that joint projects have a number of advantages over going it alone: they help stage more complex experiments, save time and money. Consequently, our cooperation is to mutual benefit.

Mikhail Chernyshev

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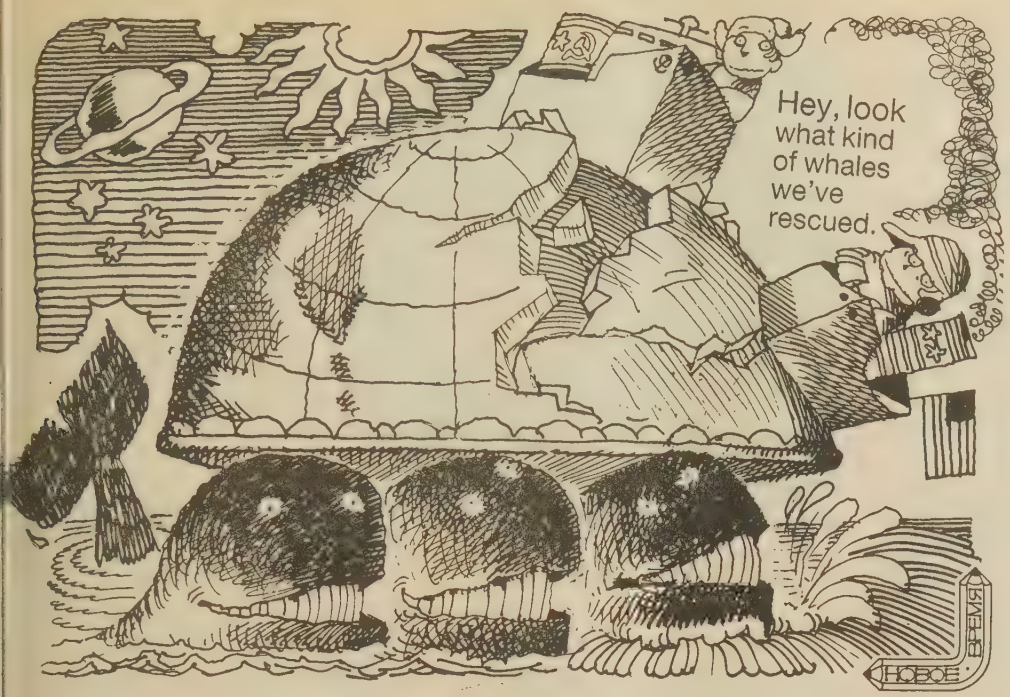


Drawing by Vsevolod Arsenyev

iloslav Chlupač,
ech journalist

The attitude to the oviet Union is today an portant issue for eryone in every re-ect. While we were arking time, carrying ut one economic re-rm after another, the oviet Union searched r and ultimately found optimal variant: it has stored the Leninist ncept of socialism, d the 19th Party Con-rence has approved is way of building cialism.

The past few years ve firmly convinced e that Soviet peres-ika should be studied thout bias, even if m a specific view-int. Bias in politics is e worst possible thing, cause it prevents us m taking an objective ientific approach and ads to misconcep-ns.

The Soviet Union day should be per-ived in its historical context. What do we know about the Soviet Union in general? We do not know even its history. Soviet historians are going to correct past mistakes. They are searching for ways of learning the truth about the past and doing away with the myths created by illusions. A truthful knowledge of history is a prerequisite for working out a real programme of social change.

We associate the current efforts of the Soviet Union with Lenin's teaching. It should be said frankly that we have a poor knowledge of Lenin's writings. We only know him from bronze or plaster busts. Our intellectuals with higher education know only textbook exerpts from his works. Without a good knowledge of Lenin's theoretical and political legacy we shall be unable adequately to understand perestroika.

Helmut Kohl,
Federal Chancellor,
F.R.G.

■ I regard Gorbachev's policy, which he calls perestroika, as useful and there is no divergence of opinion in the alliance (NATO – **Ed.**) on this question... I especially welcome the fact that the General Secretary is going to the United States in December, as this means that negotiations will go ahead irrespective of the inauguration of the President-elect and a new administration.

Jeoffrey Howe,
Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
Great Britain

■ We want to maintain our effective relationship with the Soviet President and his collegues. We intend to make it clear that we wish them all the best and, in particular, every success in the exceptionally difficult task of restructuring the country's economy.
(Retranslated from the Russian)

A. Jamsranjav,
Minister of Public
Security,
Mongolian People's
Republic

■ In the thirties and forties the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Mongolia got out of public control and committed extremely serious violations of socialist law. The Ministry of Public Security, with the assistance of the appropriate authorities, is now working to restore the good name of the innocent people who suffered at that time. We must create reliable guaranties so that no one can, under any circumstances, unlawfully encroach on the freedom of man in the future.

In 1937, when mass arrests and persecution had begun in Mongolia, Choibalsan was a member of the Political Bureau of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, First Deputy to Premier Khuraldan, Defence Minister, Commander-in-Chief of the People's Army and Minister for Internal Affairs. He had the rank of Marshal of Mongolia and even the title of "dear leader." Too much power was concentrated in one hand. The Ministry of Internal Affairs headed by him subjected thousands of people to repression, among them many valuable workers trained in the years of revolution and in the postrevolutionary period.

The "extraordinary commission," set up in accordance with a decision of the 3rd Plenum of the MPRP Central Committee held in October 1937, consisted, besides Choibalsan, of Central Committee secretary Luvsansharav, and Minister of Justice Tserendorj. The two named last were soon arrested.

It is necessary to eliminate the "blank spots" in the history of our party and state. I have no doubt that the MPRP will, in the spirit of new thinking, give a political evaluation of the complex historical periods and of specific individuals.

Charles Redman,
Spokesman for the U.S.
State Department

■ The United States welcomes the South African Government's decision not to send Nelson Mandela back to prison. This step is commendable from the human point of view. We still believe that the unconditional release of Mandela and other members of the opposition is essential for the search for a peaceful settlement to the country's acute domestic problems. We hope that the South African government's decision to eleviate Mandela's conditions of imprisonment can be regarded the step in this direction.
(Retranslated from the Russian)

Sam Nujoma:
I believe...

Sam Nujoma, President of the South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia (SWAPO), has spoken with New Times correspondent Nikolai Reshetnyak.

Sam Nujoma and his granddaughter
Photo by V. Panov

Today, as never before, I believe in a brighter tomorrow for my country, said Sam Nujoma. The Geneva Accords on a settlement in the south of Africa open up a perspective for an independent Namibia. There is no need to say how happy I am. My dream, which is also the dream of all Namibian patriots who have been struggling for the sovereignty of their land for many decades, is coming true. We never wanted war, blood or destruction, but our peaceful call for freedom met with most brutal repressions at the hands of the South African colonialists. It was after this that SWAPO called for the armed struggle that soon swept the whole country. The authority of our organization has grown tremendously in the clashes with South African punitive squads. SWAPO is the leading force in the struggle for independence in our land.

What do you think the role of the world community should be in the solution of the Namibian problem?

The Namibian problem is certainly of an international character and as such it comes within the competence of the United Nations as a universal world forum. We think that certain guarantees are needed to secure Namibian independence. It would have been to the advantage of our people to have received such guarantees from the U.N. Security Council.

The solution of the Namibian problem has been vastly influenced by the current international thaw. The new political thinking, in particular in dealing with regional conflicts, made it possible to start the quadripartite talks between Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States. The Soviet-American summit meetings have also greatly contributed to the solution of regional conflicts.

Lastly I should mention the international worldwide campaign for solidarity with the people of Namibia. The inhuman apartheid regime has been unanimously condemned by the world community.

The economic sanctions launched by a number of countries against the Pretoria regime have also been instrumental in unblocking the situation in the region. Some years ago voices were raised against the sanctions, claiming they would only harm blacks in Namibia and South Africa. It is now evident that the economic boycott, though not universal, delivered a blow not on South Africa's blacks, but on the white minority – the pillar of racism.

The international solidarity with the fighting people of Namibia, complemented by the military defeats of the South African Army by Angolan troops operating together with the Cuban internationalists, have resulted in the changes in South Africa itself. Those who realized that it was impossible to resolve the problems of Southwest Africa by military means started to get the upper hand. Pretoria had to come to the bargaining table, and decide on a pullout first from Angola and now from Namibia.

How do you see Namibia's future?

The immediate objectives of SWAPO are clear: first we must end the illegal occupation of our country by South African troops and achieve the complete observance of the U.N. Security Council's Resolution 435. Then, in the spring of 1989 general elections must take place in Namibia under strict international control and supervision. It is imperative that the refugees who fled from the country at different times and for different reasons should take part in the elections. All Namibians will be given the opportunity

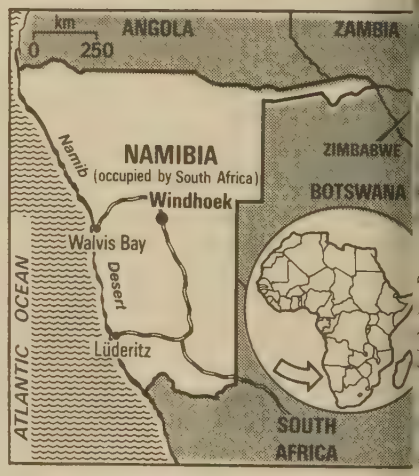
From Resolution 435 of the U.N. Security Council of September 29, 1978:

The Security Council "reiterates that its objective is the withdrawal of South Africa's illegal administration from Namibia and the transfer of power to the people of Namibia...;

"**decides** to establish... a United Nations Transition Assistance Group..., namely to ensure the early independence of Namibia through free elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations;

"**welcomes** the preparedness of the South West Africa People's Organization to cooperate...;

"**calls upon** South Africa forthwith to cooperate with the Secretary-General in the implementation of the present resolution..."



Representatives of Angola, Cuba, the South African Republic, and the United States of America met in the capital of the People's Republic of Congo to sign the Brazzaville protocol, which concludes the talks of the parties concerned on the settlement of the regional conflict, in Southwest Africa.

Angola and Namibia... The former is a sovereign state, the latter a territory illeg

to participate in the creation of a society free of oppression and racism without any discrimination. Let the people decide for themselves which party and which leader they prefer. SWAPO does not fear competition from other political parties and organizations. I admit, that we believe in our victory at the elections. However, I would like to stress once again that only free elections can confirm my conviction.

If we win, SWAPO's political platform is self-evident. We absolutely reject apartheid. In the international arena we adhere to the principles of non-alignment, and solidarity with national liberation movements including the African National Congress, which continues to wage a heroic struggle against the South African apartheid regime.

Naturally, Namibia will join the Organization of African Unity as soon as we win independence. Namibia will also join the United Nations.

Our programme speaks of socialist changes in the economy. But this is a remote task, and will take years to achieve. We must remember that our country remains an economic hostage of Pretoria and the transnational corporations. We are realists. It won't be possible to break our existing economic ties at once or in the near future, whatever our attitude to them might be.

The South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia (SWAPO) is the leading force in the struggle for the independence of Namibia. It was founded on April 19, 1960. SWAPO is a long-time leader of the guerilla movement against the South African occupation forces. SWAPO combines armed struggle with political and diplomatic initiatives.

Nonetheless, we are determined to reconsider the terms for foreign firms active in the country. Namibian society must have at least something profitable from their presence here.

Land won't be nationalized. White farmers in independent Namibia will still be landowners. They have nothing to fear, I'd like to emphasize... Only uncultivated plots and the land of those who fled the country will be redeemed and transferred to the poorest peasantry.

SWAPO is well aware of its responsibility for the destiny of the people and the country, and is prepared to shoulder the burden of power.

You take an active part in the conferences of leaders of the front-line states. What do you think is necessary to turn the south African region into a zone of peace, free development and cooperation?

I have said repeatedly that the South African apartheid regime is the main source of conflict in the region. Brigandage against Angola, Mozambique and other front-line states, support for UNITA in Angola and for the Mozambique National Resistance, and the incessant aggravation of tension in the region are consequences of the apartheid regime. That is why the objective is to abolish this disgraceful system.

We are grateful to the leaders of the front-line states and especially to the leadership of the People's Republic of Angola for their support of SWAPO. The goodwill move of Luanda and Havana concerning the withdrawal of Cuban internationalists from Angola in accordance with the mutually agreed schedule is convincing evidence that military confrontation is giving way to reason, to the desire for a peace zone in the south of Africa. However, much work in this direction is still to be done.

After Namibian independence is declared, we will apply for membership of one of the regional associations of the south of Africa. This means that we are determined to pursue political and economic cooperation for the sake of the development and prosperity of our nations.

LUANDA

A new beginning

ally occupied by the South African Republic. What do they have in common? Why are the names of these two states often coupled in news reports from the south of Africa? It is not only geographical proximity that matters. These two countries share the common fate associated with confrontation with the South African Republic.

The quadripartite talks began in May 1988 and were conducted in different cities. All in all, there were nine rounds of these talks. Pretoria's acceptance of the U.N. Security Council's Resolution 435 of September 29, 1978, on granting independence to Namibia was linked with the pullout from Angola of the Cuban troops that had arrived there in 1975 at the request of the Angolan government and in accordance with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, to defend the country's sovereignty from encroachments by South African racists. In August of this year, under an agreement a cease-fire between the Angolan and South African forces on Angolan territory was proclaimed, and all South African troops were withdrawn from Angola. Simultaneously SWAPO declared a cease-fire. Later in August, Angola and Cuba signed an agreement in principle on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the country. It proved very difficult to agree on a schedule for the withdrawal because of the S.A.R.'s position. The situation required the maximum preparedness for compromise and bold decisions in the spirit of the new political thinking. Initially, the South African side demanded a withdrawl over seven months, while Angola stood by 48 months. The United States offered a compromise – 24 months. The talks were postponed.

Only the ninth round, which took place in Geneva in mid-November, yielded the final agreement, stipulating the withdrawal over 27 months of the 50-thousand-strong Cuban force from Angola.

According to the terms of the agreement, 3,000 Cuban troops will leave Angola immediately after the Brazzaville protocol is signed, and another 25,000 before the elections in Namibia due in summer of next year. In 1989 a total of 33,000 Cuban troops will be withdrawn from Angola. The remaining troops will leave in 1990 and early in 1991.

At the Geneva meeting, the Cuban delegation declared that the mutually agreed schedule meets the security considerations of Angola and the departing Cuban troops. "It is not an optimal time period, but in a negotiation all sides must make concessions," the spokesman for the Cuban delegation, Alcibiades Hidalgo, had then noted.

The agreement stipulates general elections in Namibia under U.N. supervision. It is important that the bulk of the South African occupation force will be withdrawn from Namibia before the elections. The remainder will be pulled out gradually after the independence of Namibia is proclaimed. Thus, Namibia, the last colony in Africa (area 824 thousand square kilometres, population 1.3 million), will attain independence.

This will probably end one of the world's most protracted regional conflicts.

Y. Borovoy

Much ado about an agreement

Why pre-term parliamentary elections were called in the country

Bryan Mulroney, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, celebrating victory

Photo from Time magazine (U.S.A.)

The Progressive Conservative Party headed by Prime Minister Bryan Mulroney kept its position by winning 170 seats in the Commons of federal parliament out of 295. Although 7 per cent short of the previous election showing, this is quite enough for forming a majority government. As the leader of the winning party, Bryan Mulroney retains his premiership. The Conservatives' rivals – Liberals and New Democrats – have increased their representation in parliament by gaining 82 and 43 seats, respectively.

Normally, elections are held every five years in Canada. This time they were due in the spring of 1989, but took place ahead of schedule. The need for pre-term elections was caused by the fact that the Canadian-American Free Trade Agreement, approved by both chambers of the U.S. Congress and by Canada's Commons (in which the Conservatives were in the overwhelming majority), the agreement suddenly got stuck in the Canadian Senate. Ordinarily, the Senate (the members of which are appointed, not elected) hardly plays much of a role in the country's political life. This time the senators, Liberals mostly, announced they were not going to endorse the agreement before the next parliamentary elections; hence the pre-term election campaign.

I think that now, after the Conservative landslide, the Canadian-American agreement is certain to be ratified and to come into force on January 1, 1989.

And now let's take a closer look at the agreement which has decided the outcome of the elections.

If it is ratified, there will emerge something like the "North American Common Market," with export and import restrictions and tariffs called off. The U.S. now buys tree quarters of Canadian exports and all the mineral fuel Canada offers for sale. In its time the Liberal government headed by Trudeau tried to restrict export with a view to keeping Canadian resources for the country's common needs. The advocates of the agreement maintain that uninhibited trade exchanges with the U.S. and the renunciation of traditional protectionism will enhance the competitiveness of the Canadian industry, stimulate the creation of new jobs in the industries engaged in the exploitation of natural resources and bring retail prices down thanks to "a free influx of cheaper American goods."

The opponents of the agreement (a pre-election poll put their proportion at 42 per cent, with 34 per cent of the Canadians being for the agreement and 24 per cent undecided) fear that it will restrict state interference in economic matters (traditionally much more active in Canada than it is in the U.S.), threaten Canadian health and social welfare programmes, and hit the farmers hard by making it no longer possible for the Canadian government to keep the prices of their produce high.

The trade unions are against the agreement – they are sure it will kill a great deal of jobs. The agreement is strongly objected to from the opposition benches, specifically by John Turner, the current leader of the Liberals (who held prime minister's post for ten weeks after Pierre Trudeau's resignation in 1984) and Edward Broadbent, the leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP). Both stress that besides everything else the Free Trade Agreement jeopardizes the distinctive Canadian socio-cultural traditions. After all, even English-speaking Canada – let alone French-speaking Quebec – has its distinguishing features which set it apart from America.

Many Canadian politicians fear that the agreement will compel the nature conservation bodies to become more lenient. (Ecology was the second problem on which the opponents of the agreement took issue with its advocates during the election campaign.) Canadian television showed a series of scary programmes on the pollution of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River with dioxin and DDT coming mostly from the United States. Public opinion polls have revealed that a third of Quebec residents does not drink tap water any longer and prefers to buy "spring water" brought in from afar, sometimes all the way from France, in large plastic bottles. Millions of famous Canadian maples have perished. The price of maple syrup, a component of national cuisine and a Canadian export item, has soared. Of special danger to Canada are acid rains blown in from the U.S.

On his pre-election tours of the country, John Turner displayed the red-and-white Canadian flag on which the maple leaf – Canada's national symbol – appeared as a sceleton of veins. As they signed the Free Trade Agreement, beneficial to the U.S., he said, the Conservatives might at least secure the United States' firm promise to reduce the discharges of sulphuric oxides and nitrogen into the atmosphere near the Canadian border – but did not do that.

Edward Broadbent remarked, with good reason, that in Canada the environment had been polluted under the Liberals as well – before the year 1984.

The election campaign was highlighted by debates on this and other problems among the three leaders who appeared on television twice.

The leader of the growing NDP declared against Canada purchasing nuclear powered submarines for patrolling

nadian waters in the Arctic, for al-cating substantial sums to environ-ental protection and welfare, for the al protection of the indigenes – In-ns, Eskimos – and other national norities. The fact that the NDP has ver been in office made it easier for adbent to criticize his Conservative d Liberal rivals for the "sins" he had mmitted at various times.

John Turner criticized the actions of Mulroney government along the me lines; in particular, he objected to Conservatives' plans for spending ht billion dollars on atomic sub-rines intended for patrolling the nadian Arctic waters. "Who are they protect us from?" a newsman asked ring television debates.

"We need them to meet our interna-nal commitments," Mulroney replied guely. In response to Turner's fine nding promises to the effect that if erals took over in office they would t right the Conservatives' blunders, adbent remarked acidly that when Liberals were in the opposition they haved like Social Democrats, and en in power – as the Conservatives. resent, Broadbent added, the Lib-s were extremely inconsistent, ng half for and half against "free de" with the U.S. As to the atomic marines, the NDP leader said that Conservatives' strange initiative s definitely ill-timed considering the armament agreements reached re-ntly. The NDP suggested, for its part, t Canada should withdraw from TO and dissolve its agreement with U.S. on North American aerospace fence.

Broadbent proved right in predicting Liberals' defeat. Mulroney emerged torious from the debates largely ing to his velvety-smooth voice, mocratic "pally" manner and undeni-le charisma of "a self-made man m the midst of the people" (he mes from a Quebec Irish family). This tory went a long way towards bring-his party to office.

Having opted for the Progressive nservative Party, the Canadians ted not only, and not so much for agreement on free trade with the S. Like their southern neighbours, y preferred the time-tested policy of Conservatives to their opponents' gue promises.

Arkady Cherkassov

The case of a runaway banker

The row involving the press baron and banker Georgios Koskotas, one of Greece's wealthiest tycoons, is still raging in Athens

The banker disappeared several days before he was due to be questioned by criminal investigators and face charges of financial machinations on a grand scale. Interpol, the Greek police, and secret services have been looking for him all over the world.

Why is Georgios Koskotas on the run and why all attempts to find him have so far failed?

Blackmail

The go-getting businessman arrived in Greece from the United States in 1979 at the age of 35. He made his fortune with an incredible speed, and no one can really say how he managed to do that. Having started as a clerk at the Bank of Crete he very soon became its president. He went on to put together a publishing concern with the same incredible speed. The concern, Grammi, now owns three daily newspapers and five magazines (see our issue No. 47/88).

According to reports in the Greek press, the investigators looking into the affairs of the Bank of Crete reported a loss of 30 billion drachmae. There has been no official word about that, but the signs are that the damage done by Koskotas's machinations may affect the entire banking system in Greece.

It transpired that he spent part of the money on funding the Grammi company and the soccer club Olympiakos, but 11 billion is still totally unaccounted for. According to his secretary, Koskotas very often ordered large sums in cash brought into his office. Where all this money went is anybody's guess; the newspaper Ethnos presumes that part of it, an estimated billion and a half drachmae, was used to bribe politicians.

The Koskotas row added a political dimension even before the Bank of Crete was visited by financial inspectors. On October 28 Georgios Papandreou, the son of the Prime Minister of Greece, suddenly called a press conference at which he charged Koskotas with trying to blackmail the government. He said that the banker gave the Minister of Justice a financial declaration to the effect that large sums of money in U.S. dollars, payable to Georgios Papandreou and certain government officials, had allegedly been remitted by the Bank of Crete to the Merrill Lynch International Bank.

Georgios Papandreou said that acting on his instructions his lawyer checked with the Merrill Lynch Bank and found out that no such sum had arrived and that, consequently, the financial declaration handed over to the Minister of Justice was fraudulent.

Immediately after that statement, Georgios Papandreou and the government officials concerned accused Koskotas of trying to blackmail the government and filed a suit against him. Kos-

Drawing by Igor Smirnov

kotas denied that he had given the declaration to the Minister of Justice and claimed that he had never seen it.

On November 7 rumours began to circulate in Athens that Koskotas had defied a court order not to leave the country and fled. Some one hundred agents were involved in an operation to keep his house and the head office of Grammi under surveillance, but they did not notice anything that could arouse suspicion. That he did escape became clear after they broke into his office to check the rumour that the banker was dead. He was not there...

There appears to be good reason to question the dedication of the police. It was widely known, after all, that a week before his disappearance Koskotas sent his family to Switzerland. The banker was therefore getting ready to take off himself, but no official action was taken.

Snowballing row

The row began to snowball after the Minister of Public Order Anastassios Sehiotis resigned on November 7. The Minister of Justice Agamemnon Koutsogiorgas resigned on November 11, and on November 16 Andreas Papandreou ordered a cabinet reshuffle.

The Prime Minister denied that the reshuffle was caused by the Koskotas row, but there was little doubt in the country that he decided to go ahead with it in order to calm public opinion in the wake of the row. The opposition parties demanded the resignation of the entire cabinet and an early parliamentary election scheduled for summer 1989.

The government used its absolute majority in parliament to reject these demands. The Prime Minister pledged to do everything within his power to investigate the row and punish those involved. Speaking before the parliamentarians of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), the ruling party in Greece, the leader of the party and head of government acknowledged that the country was going through a profound political crisis. The affair was not properly investigated, Andreas Papandreou said, but it had cast a shadow on both leading politicians and the democratic institutions of the country.

It follows from Andreas Papandreou's statements over the Koskotas affair that the Prime Minister views it as an attempt to mount an offensive on the government and the ruling party. In his appearance on national television, Andreas Papandreou said that the Koskotas affair is condusive to a conspiracy of foreign and local circles aimed at destabilizing the situation in the country.

Scathing criticism

As a result of the Koskotas affair the government has found itself under fire from both right and left. It was sharply criticized by the leading bourgeois New Democracy party as well as the Communist Party of Greece. All newspapers except for those controlled by the government have accused members of the cabinet of a cover-up and support for Koskotas. The papers point out that for some reason several government agencies remitted money to the Bank of Crete, instead of the national Bank of Greece.

It is not clear why the leading financial institutions of the country gave the bank owned by Koskotas loans, although it was clear that his finances were in dire straits. According to the former Vice-Chairman of the Bank of Crete, Panayotis Vakalis, practically all leading politicians of both the ruling party and New Democracy maintained contacts with Koskotas.

The most scathing criticism was levelled at Agamemnon Koutsogiorgas who was Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in the previous cabinet.

He has now lost the post of Finance Minister and the post of Deputy Prime Minister was annulled in the new cabinet altogether. Koutsogiorgas now holds the post of Minister in charge of the Prime Minister's Office, but the fact that he is still on the cabinet aroused sharp criticism on the part of the opposition.

There have been signs of disapproval of its leaders' actions within the ruling PASOK party. The resignation of an authoritative member of the party and former cabinet Minister Apostolos Lazaris from the party and Parliament is an alarming development, but Papandreou clearly intends to carry on with his tough policy within the party. He called for discipline at his meeting with PASOK MPs and said that he would not tolerate any pressure. New Democracy went out of its way to try and discredit PASOK over the row and reduce PASOK's prestige amongst the voters in the run-up to the elections. New Democracy leaders say that their victory at the elections is assured and that they alone are capable of bringing order to Greece.

The Communist Party of Greece has issued a statement to the effect that the government is unable to find a way out of the present impasse and that the only political solution is to hold an early parliamentary election on the basis of proportionate representation to give all parties the same chance. The Communists insist on forming a coalition of left-wing democratic forces as an alternative to the leading role of the two largest parties, PASOK and New Democracy. Other left-wing parties have not accepted that proposal.

As the rival parties continue their acrimonious exchanges it is still unclear where Koskotas is hiding. His testimony could provide answers to many of the crucial questions raised by the affair.

The signs are that Greek newsmen have done far better than Interpol or the Greek police. The Athens paper Nea has reported, quoting "reliable sources," that Koskotas is in Brazil. According to it, the banker escaped to Italy in his yacht. From there he travelled to Reykjavik to reunite with his family and then took a plane to Brazil with which Greece has no extradition agreements.

A government spokesman said at first that he could not confirm these reports, but the next day a reporter of the newspaper Vima called the Rio Palace hotel in Rio de Janeiro and found out that a man named Koskotas was indeed staying at the hotel. After that the government spokesman acknowledged that according to the Greek embassy in Brazil "Koskotas was recently seen" in that country, but in the meantime the runaway banker vanished once again.

Vladimir Malyshev

ATHENS

From the editors. After this material was ready for publication reports came in that Koskotas was arrested in the United States where he flew in from Jamaica. The Greek government demanded that the runaway banker be extradited immediately.

Design sketch

Hans Jochen Vogel

The Soviet Union has embarked on the process of profound change and renewal denoted by the Russian word perestroika, which has now become current in our language too. I was able to observe this process for myself during my last visit to Moscow in May 1988. My party and many West Germans are following perestroika with interest and sympathy. We wish the policy success because it serves the Soviet people. We are convinced, however, that our own people, and the peoples of Europe and of the world, also stand to gain from its success.

I

The concept of a "common European home" must be credited to General Secretary Gorbachev. This vivid metaphor excites the imaginations of Europeans. What should this European home be like? I find the image a seductive one and I will use it and enter the architectural competition to design and decorate this home. The need for such a competition is becoming increasingly urgent.

This is how I see the European home: it is a building with bay windows, niches and wings corresponding to the cultural, political and economic diversity of the European peoples. Despite their outstanding common features, this house will accommodate all the idiosyncracies and differences of this diverse continent with all its rich traditions.

Hans Jochen Vogel, a prominent figure in the world social democratic movement, is chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and its floor leader in West German Bundestag.

The house must provide shelter and security for its inhabitants, and no one should feel threatened, isolated or cut off from everyone else. A common way of life and common work must be pursued to suit all the occupants and ensure a fruitful exchange of opinions leading to greater sharing between all of them without any loss of identity.

Such a home cannot be built without taking into account the existing historical foundations. In his book, General Secretary Gorbachev cites the example of Czechoslovakia which is at the heart of Europe not just geographically, but also because it is at a crossroads fo numerous European traditions. This is one instance of existing foundations which the architects should not ignore. My perception is that different floors and different apartments should also have different interiors. For the floors are inhabited by nations that belong to different systems and have chosen their own forms of communal life. The interiors of the different apartments will reflect the national idiosyncracies of their occupants. For all their diversity, the interiors will have some common features that facilitate their life together.

The European home must have broad stairways between storeys. Thanks to these stairways, the different floors will not be turned into different houses within a single house; the occupants will be able to meet and talk to each other on the common staircases and in common lounges. One should also be aware of the differences between floors and apartments, and not demand that the occupants furnish their apartments to suit the taste of others.

Good architects know that design and exterior and interior decor influence relations between a house's occupants. Corridors may link all the apartments or, on the contrary, bring all the residents together only in the office of the house superintendent. This is an essential difference. Architecture, then, should express the laws of the house, based on the equality and self-determination of its inhabitants. This means that we should try in our European home to do away with the struggle for supremacy and domination over others, which has long characterized European history. In this house everyone must learn to observe its rules. The European house must be open to the whole world, to all our guests, neighbours and friends outside Europe. The charter of the house must have as its title the notion of "tolerance," which is the message of Lessing's famous parable.

So much for metaphors. Let me now make a few basic observations.

II

Europe is one of the five continents of our planet stretching from the Urals to the Atlantic and from North Cape to the Mediterranean. It is inhabited by more than 500 million people speaking a hundred-odd languages. Europe is not just Strasbourg, Paris, London, Madrid, Rome, Munich and Hamburg; it is also Stockholm and Basel, Kiev, Moscow, Warsaw, Cracow, Prague, Budapest, Dresden and Berlin. It is Pushkin as well as Goethe, Victor Hugo as well as Tolstoi.

Europe needs new forms of tolerance and pluralism. The aim of European tolerance is not socio-political indifference or apathy; on the contrary, its aim is that loyalty to principles that rules out dogmatism and "enemy images." To ensure a peaceful and worthy future for all the states and peoples of Europe there must be, within each system, as open a discussion as possible of the successes and failures, the advantages and disadvantages of their own system as compared with that of their neighbours.

At any rate, Europe must adopt a new and dynamic form of pluralism in place of the decades-old antagonistic "status quo." The eradication of the "enemy image" and antagonism should lead to peaceful competition between the different systems.

The competition of ideas is in no sense incompatible with the policy of détente. It will relieve the internal dynamics of both systems of dogmatic shackles and give scope for the creative forces of reform within each society. It would be peaceful competition without the use of force, with freer borders for the good of all, with both sides deriving benefits from expanded cooperation. In this way we would like to bring about a qualitative improvement in both systems through reform. We think it is now possible to pass on to a new polit-

ical stage when the two systems will cease to curse one another as evil incarnate, and each will mutually recognize the existence of the other system.

The inviolability of borders and respect for the integrity and sovereignty of all states within their present boundaries is a basic condition for this new European policy. However, Europe should not be frozen into a political "status quo." Greater East-West cooperation will enhance the security of all peoples and ensure greater freedom and social justice. Cooperation will clear the atmosphere in Europe and fill people's hearts with new hope. These are the finest fruits of politics.

III

Cooperation in every area and the development of a system of mutual security is the basis for peaceful coexistence in Europe.

In this context, we welcome and support the Soviet Union's readiness to establish contacts with the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, the Western European Union and the North Atlantic Assembly.

The recent mutual formal recognition of the CMEA and the European Community puts East-West relations on a new footing. Long-term trade with West European partners has already created a certain body of confidence. This must be used for the qualitative deepening and quantitative growth of economic relations.

By combining interests resulting from bilateral interdependence, one can achieve mutually beneficial East-West cooperation backed up by a network of long-term treaties, cooperation independent of the vicissitudes of politics. This conception accords with the political goals of the SDPG and the economic interests of the European nations. The growing economic relations and technological exchanges between East and West will have a beneficial effect on cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

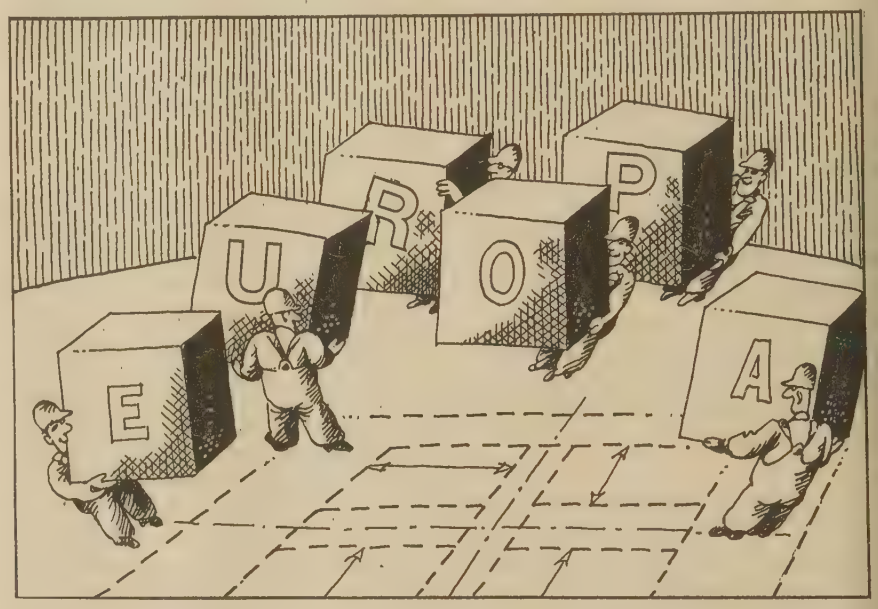
The two sides have common interests in other areas of cooperation as well. The Chernobyl disaster has brought it home to everyone that countries cannot prevent damage to the environment single-handed. Environmental problems highlight the interdependence of European states. In Eastern Europe, as in the F.R.G., environmental issues were until recently subordinate to faith in progress. The situation is now changing: we see attempts to work out an ecologically sound concept of progress. European states are increasingly interested in the exchange of expertise and know-how in the field of modern ecological technology. This opportunity must be used to preserve the European home.

IV

All peoples and states, including those with opposing systems of values, must become partners in order to survive. This is particularly true of Europe. Growing interdependence and vulnerability require new rules of coexistence. In the age of weapons of mass destruction, neither side can maintain its security unilaterally through arming. Attempts to achieve security in this way in East-West relations have merely led to a greater threat to the security of both sides. It is a mistake to think one can start to disarm while arming. Common sense will eventually prevail because neither side can become substantially stronger than the potential enemy and each must bear a common responsibility for the security of the other in his own interest. Joint security is unthinkable without a policy of détente and cooperation.

A non-violent world order has not yet come into existence, therefore the European policy of peace must be backed up by a policy of security relying on military force – a policy whose underlying principles are common responsibility, reasonable sufficiency and inability to attack. Both East and West must, therefore reform their military strategies, so that they adequately ensure the defence of the two blocs, while making them structrurally incapable of launching an attack, in particular a surprise attack or invasion. A policy of security without threats has a better chance now than ever before. The agreement on the universal destruction of all land-based medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles is a victory for Reason, as it checks the dynamics of armament at a crucial juncture.

The political and psychological significance of the agreement is immense: fear has given way to hope. In the INF treaty the superpowers for the first time reached the common understanding that the world becomes a safer place not through stockpiling arms, but through destroying them. It has now become possible to replace the dynamics of armament with the dynamics of disarmament. This gives hope to many Europeans, and the process of disarmament could spread to other areas. We favour an early agreement on strategic offensive weapons, and a third zero option on short-range nuclear missiles; we favour the worldwide destruction of chemical weapons and the creation of stability in Europe in conventional arms at the lowest possible level, with the adoption of a structure which will make attack impossible for both blocks.



Drawing by Nikolai Shcherbakov

V

The goal is to create a common European order. In terms of human

rights, and with the participation of both superpowers, it must guarantee for all European countries, as well as for the two German states, the implementation of the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, that is, it must ensure security, economic cooperation, human rights and basic freedoms both East and West. In the opinion of the Social Democrats, full human rights can only be exercised where there is harmony between individual and social rights and safeguards.

In the second phase of détente, for which the Soviet reform efforts are opening up great possibilities, the foundations may be laid to prevent further breaks in relations between East and West over the difference in social systems, their relations on the contrary being characterized by shared interest in the solution of problems pertaining to politics, economics, environmental protection and human rights.

Such an order in Europe cannot be established overnight. It must be created step by step, as a result of a protracted process, through the elimination of militarization, hostility and conflict between states and social systems.

VI

We must pause to reflect: Europe has a mission of worldwide significance. It is in its power to exert a calming and pacifying effect on world politics, help overcome hunger and poverty in the world and reduce confrontation and contribute towards greater cooperation.

The European community and the U.S. are of the same mind with regard to the democratic and state and legal structure of society, and where the borderline between state power and the individual and his rights should pass. The countries of the European community have a common experience with the Soviet Union and the other East European countries, – they know what it is to be occupied and devastated by the armies of other countries.

To carry out its foreign policy mission, Europe must use all its economic influence, its cultural traditions and historical experience accumulated over more than two millennia, sometimes through errors and bloody tragedies. Europe must achieve a new unity. ■

GREAT BRITAIN – EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

That dissenting stance again

There will be no central bank in Europe as long as she lived, Margaret Thatcher declared recently. This categorical statement highlights the acridity of the debate that has flared up in West European capitals over the question of the economic and political integration of Western Europe.

It would seem that the question of the gradual coming together of the twelve Common Market countries within the framework of a single union, as envisioned in the programme documents of the Common Market and endorsed by all its members, had been settled once and for all. Latterly, however, it has again become the subject of heated political controversy.

The discussion centres around the ultimate goal of the integration. The vast majority of the members of the Community hold that the projected establishment of a "single European market" in 1992 (removal of all customs barriers, free movement of goods, capital and manpower) should be only another step towards further approximation in all spheres, including the political, all the way to the merging in a single European Union or "a United States of Europe," as it is also called. In their public pronouncements, the leaders of the Common Market, primarily the F.R.G., Belgium and Italy, stress that the year 1992 should clear the way to new, far-reaching measures towards the integration of the Common Market countries in the political, financial, military and other fields.

However, these plans have unexpectedly evoked strong opposition from the Conservative government of Great Britain. In a series of public statements, Margaret Thatcher has emphatically rejected the very idea of political integration of the EEC countries and the establishment of a new superpower on the continent. In her view, cooperation between the countries of the Community, however close it may be in all spheres, must not jeopardize their political independence and national sovereignty. Voluntary and active cooperation between independent sovereign states is the best way to build a European community, she said, speaking in the Belgian city of Bruges this autumn.

The explanation

What is the explanation for Britain's dissenting position and what does it hold out for the EEC and for Europe as a whole? Searching for a clue to the seemingly inexplicable "British phenomenon," observers point to three basic factors – historico-geographic, political, and ideological.

Historically, Britain has never considered itself a purely European country. Separated from the continent by the English Channel, it was in a sense isolated from what happened there, and became involved in European affairs only as a result of invasion from without. Experience has taught the British to avoid becoming too closely involved in European affairs and to give priority to preserving their national sovereignty and independence.

The primacy of "non-European interests" in British policy explains why Britain at first found itself outside the processes of West European integration which began in the mid-1950s. Not only was Britain not among the founders of the Common Market who signed the Treaty of Rome in 1957, but it actively tried to counteract it by creating the European Free Trade Association. True, the attempt failed and Britain was subsequently obliged to ask for admission to the EEC.

The third factor – the ideological – began to play a particularly important role in British politics with the advent to power in 1979 of the Tory government headed by Margaret Thatcher. Propounding ex-

Mrs Thatcher is against political integration of the Common Market members

Reprinted from Espresso (Italy)

treme individualism and giving every encouragement to private enterprise (recall her famous dictum: there is no such thing as a collective – only individuals), her cabinet proved to be one of the most "ideologized" in contemporary British history. The Conservatives proceeded vigorously to carry out reforms in all areas of governmental activity – denationalization of industry, stepping up military spending, cutting down social programmes, extension of privileges and "handouts" to big business, harassment of the trade unions, and restrictions on freedom of speech and the press. The reforms, which, the Tories maintained, would release people's initiative and creative energy from the fetters of state regulation, came to be known as Thatcherism.

It must be admitted that these measures, despite their unpopularity and the high price society had to pay for them did yield some positive results. The economy has been vitalized, there has been a steady decline in unemployment, although the jobless rate remains high, and inflation, which under the Labour government reached a two-digit figure, has been practically curbed. The south of England, where the most advanced branches of industry, including the war industry, are located, is experiencing a veritable boom. The economic upsurge has increased the incomes of the population and ensured the Conservatives the support of a substantial section of the electorate, as is evidenced by the Tory victories in three successive elections (although no small part in these victories was played by disunity in the camp of the opposition). Margaret Thatcher has held the post of Prime Minister longer than any of her predecessors this century. Great Britain's international prestige has notably heightened.

All these unquestionable achievements have confirmed the Conservatives in the belief that they are in possession of a universal formula for correct guidance of the country's economy, that the future belongs to conservatism, and that other countries would do well to follow Britain's example.

However, the Tory vision of a triumphal march of conservatism throughout the other EEC countries has not materialized. In many of them the electorate has given a rebuff to the supporters of Thatcherism, and the reins of government are held by Socialist parties which by no means share the philosophy of conservatism. This has not prevented them from registering successes in the economic and social spheres, successes which are in no way inferior and in many cases superior to the British, offering an example of an alternative, more civilized path of development.

Rapprochement with such countries within a "united Europe" is seen by the Tories as a direct threat to their ideology. They fear that conservatism might be overwhelmed in an all-European setup and that the central bodies of the Union in Brussels would pursue a policy contrary to their basic values.

The outburst in Bruges

The spark that set off an explosion of Conservative indignation was the speech of Jacques Delors, chairman of the Commission of the European Communities, at the TUC Congress in Brighton at the beginning of September. By 1992, he said, 80 per cent of all the questions decided today by the British Parliament would come within the competence of the Common Market headquarters in Brussels. More, calling on the trade unions to support the unification of Western Europe, Delors promised that in a "united Europe" the interests of the workers and other trade union members would be protected, all the way to granting them a share in the management of enterprises and in deciding production and social issues.

This was more than the Tories could take. Delors' statement confirmed their worst suspicions about the threat to their philosophy, ideology and life-style. The reply was not long in coming. On her arrival in Bruges, Prime Minister Thatcher stunned the "Eurobureaucrats" with a sharply worded speech in which she declared that Britain was resolutely opposed to plans for the political integration of Western Europe. She repeated her statement practically word for word at the annual conference of the Conservative Party in October, and later in Parliament. The Tories had not laboured all these years to free Britain from the paralysis of socialism in order to see it sneaking in through the back door of centralized control and bureaucracy in Brussels, she said. Then came her meeting with Italian Prime Minister De Mita, a well-known supporter of West European integration, during which she delivered herself of the uncompromising remark cited at the beginning of this article. This statement acquires particular significance if we bear in mind that literally on the eve of the British-Italian meeting the leaders of the Social Democratic parties of Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg and the F.R.G. issued a joint statement in support of the aims of a "united Europe." "The political rift between Mrs Thatcher and other European leaders is now a gulf," the Daily Express observed.

Risk of isolation

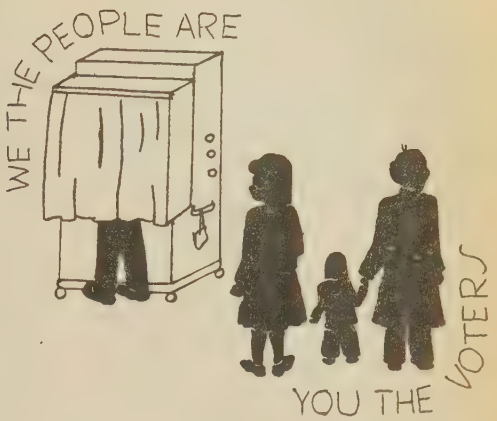
Passions continue to run high. The British press comments that Great Britain has found itself in almost complete isolation within the EC on the paramount issue of the future of the Union. Some observers believe that Margaret Thatcher will be able effectively to impede the movement towards integration only if she has substantial support in the European Parliament. The Tories, therefore, pin particular hopes on the elections to the Europarliament scheduled to be held next summer. Unless the Tories, make an exceptional showing in these elections they may face disaster, the Sunday Express commented. Advocates of integration like former Prime Minister Edward Heath, for instance, warned in the Guardian newspaper that Thatcher's position could leave Britain outside the bounds of a united Europe. Whatever Britain does, the other EEC countries are determined to move forward, with or without it, the paper says. In an interview to the Daily Express, Jacques Delors voiced the same sentiments, saying that Britain is facing a real threat of isolation. It has found itself in isolation twice before, he said. Eleven members of the Common Market had made it clear last February in Brussels that it was time to stop the discussion and that they were prepared to carry things to completion without Britain.

Yuri Levchenko

TASS correspondent – for New Times

LONDON

How they voted in Pennington



Alexander Pumpyansky,
our special correspondent

At about five o'clock in the afternoon, on November 8, we left Patricia Compton's house in Pennington, New Jersey, and went to a nearby polling station.

Pennington is a small town with two- and three-storey houses, some of them dating from the 19th and even 18th centuries. Their owners are people of middle or upper middle class. The trees are unusually colourful at this time of the year. The whole range of colours of the Indian summer, from the ochre of the vines to the deep purple of the oaks, was fading. Our footsteps rustled in the carpet of fallen leaves.

"Since childhood I have associated the carpet under our feet with the smell of burnt leaves," Patricia said. For some reason her words struck me. I had come to the United States on an assignment. In a few hours I had to dispatch a report on the elections – an analysis of the election campaign, the range of issues raised in the debates, and a cautious forecast for the future (see issue 46). There would be nothing in it about my previous meetings, that quiet evening in Pennington, and what I saw at the polling station.

I was particularly interested in macro-level issues, so to speak. Who will move into the White House? Who will have his finger on the button? But there is also a micro-level, the impact of politics on daily life, grass-roots democracy. How does grass-roots democracy look, not on TV screens but in everyday life?

At the polling station with Patricia and Helen

The polling station turned out to be a small festively decorated school, a local temple of democracy, with the voting machine its altar. To tell the truth, I am more accustomed to using the word "machine" in this context figuratively and, of course, critically to describe an arm-twisting system. But this time it was, indeed, a machine with levers and handles. Detailed instructions explain how to operate them in voting for or against one or other candidate. A sliding curtain in the entrance ensures privacy for the voter who can, at the last moment, reflect on final choice.

Sitting at the booth was a woman, the kind of women you meet in numerous offices in our country. They protect them from strangers, usually knitting socks at the same time. The similarity was quite plausible, because the woman held a needle and thread. The other end of the thread was tied to the machine. She seemed to be making a Christmas tree wreath by stringing little paper flags onto the thread.

On the left and on the right stood two desks with four clerks sitting at them. There were three voters at a time: one was having his name registered in the book on the table on the left, the other was waiting for his turn at the machine, and a third was in the booth behind the curtain.

The woman in charge of registering voters welcomed Patricia, as she had, incidentally, almost everyone who entered the hall. Patricia introduced me to her and I asked for permission to sit quietly to one side. I was allowed to sit and watch.

Though she had a cold, the woman, a little over 30, was full of life and action. She had come to the station before it opened and was supposed to stay there till it closed. True, she was entitled to make a break twice for meals, but not for more than an hour in all. Patricia remarked it must be a very hard job. The woman smiled cheerfully, replying it was a good chance to gossip and see the townsfolk, because usually you don't see even your neighbours for weeks. With the same readiness, she turned to me and explained everything I asked.

Everything begins with the thick book in which the voters in a given neighbourhood are registered, she told me. Let us open it at the letter "B." Here is my name Bertoni, Helen. Look, I have always voted for the Democrats – in 1976, 1980, 1984 and today.

After that explanation I understood what Helen was doing. She finds the name of a voter in the book, and the latter has to sign his or her name in it. Then she compares the signature with the original one (just like in our savings-banks) and hands over a form. The number of the form is also registered in the book. The voter enters the booth and, leaving it, gives the form over to the other woman who strings it onto her thread. To be on the safe side, she holds the thread tightly in her hands.

Nobody produced any identity cards, and nobody, in my presence, asked voters to show them. Helen explained that in a small town like Pennington everyone knows each other. In larger towns there are naturally more people, and the voting procedure is stricter.

But this did not dispel my suspicions. I wanted to know whether potential swindlers could rig the election. How is control exercised if the election results depend on the honesty of voters and a needle and thread?

Helen explained that four representatives of the electoral commission (two Republicans and two Democrats) are on duty at the station, and at least one representative from each party must be con-

stantly in the hall. If a blind person comes to vote, he or she is led to the booth by two members of the commission from both parties.

The commission members sat at the desk on the left, and at the one on the right were authorized representatives of the candidates in the given electoral district. These representatives can query the legality of a given electoral case and the commission is obliged to ascertain whether a person is eligible to vote at a given station.

The votes are counted by the machine, Helen continued, and when the station closes the results are checked against those on the thread. Later, they can also be checked at any time. By the way, the old machine is soon to be replaced by an electronic one, and so there will not be the slightest chance of cheating the system, Helen concluded.

Three misunderstandings took place in my presence. One young woman's name was not in the book, but, having established her address more exactly, Helen said she could go to a neighbouring station. Another voter had almost signed in the book, but noticed somebody else's signature against his name. Having studied the signature and the next page, Helen understood what had happened. An hour earlier, an elderly man had accidentally signed his name in the wrong place. A brief statement of the case was drawn up. The last case was of the same kind, but quite simpler. A man and wife came to vote at different times, and the man put his signature against his wife's name. This mistake was also recorded in the book.

There was a steady flow of people to the station and this evidently pleased Helen. Sixty per cent of the electorate had voted by 17.30. Helen said they expected an 80 per cent turnout by 20.00.

Most of the townsfolk are wealthy people, Patricia told me, and they vote regularly and in an orderly manner, as a rule for Republicans, she added with a sigh. Patricia herself votes for the Democrats.

Eighty per cent is a high turnout, of course. The average figure for the country, as I learned later, was 50 per cent. Exactly half of all eligible voters did not go to the polls. Half of them did not go either out of ignorance or mistrust of the candidates and the system, or simply because they just did not care.

A knock at the door

The Stars and Stripes flutter over every station. There was, however, no canvassing on polling day. At the station the voter should listen only to the voice of his or her conscience. Posters and streamers can only be displayed at a distance of more than 100 yards away from the polls. Canvassing and a real election campaign may still continue there.

The election campaign is a purely party and personal matter. Each party and each candidate launches their campaign at town, county, state and national level.

In neighbouring Middlesex County, the Democrats had rented two floors of a former furniture store in New Brunswick for their campaign. On the ground floor, there was the headquarters for the re-election of Senator Frank Lautenberg from New Jersey, and on the first floor the headquarters for the Dukakis-Bentsen campaign. On both floors lay heaps of posters, leaflets, stickers, buttons, envelopes for letters and printer matter, as well as computers for registering voters.

The atmosphere was noticeably livelier on the ground floor. There was only one day to go before the election. Many desks in the presidential campaign headquarters on the first floor were empty because, I was told, the staff had been working like hell for 18 hours and were now having a rest to make up for lost sleep. I felt, however, that there might also have been another reason for the lull. Was it not the shadow of defeat that hung over the first floor? On the ground floor, there was an atmosphere of confidence, a feeling of coming victory.

However, Kimberley, or Kim, Betts, a tall 21-year-old girl wearing a T-shirt with "Vote Dukakis" on it, had no intention of giving up. She lives in Boston, but is currently studying in Washington. Incidentally, Kim visited the Soviet Union recently and pronounced with pleasure several words in Russian. She told me there were a dozen paid workers in their county headquarters, but most of the staff were volunteers, and she was one of them.

Asked why she had decided to take part in the Democratic campaign, Kim gave two reasons. The first time she saw Michael Dukakis was several years ago, when he arrived at their school during his campaign against drug addiction. Secondly, her prime concern is a nuclear freeze. I would not canvass for the Democrats, Kim said, if I did not believe that nuclear disarmament is possible and that Dukakis understands the need for it and can really do something about it.

What were the campaign workers doing on the eve of the election? They were drawing up more exact lists of registered Democrats and maps of how to get to their homes by car. On polling day, 100 campaign activists would ring potential Democratic voters, inviting them to the stations, and 700 more activists would go round, knocking on their doors.

"Will you call on Republican voters?" I asked, knowing my question was absurd.

"Certainly not. We shall only visit those who are likely to vote for the Democrats."

The main thing is how many people go to the polls. Each campaign headquarters is naturally interested in ensuring as high a turnout of its voters as possible, the more so as there are not a few "undecided", those who finally make up their minds only five minutes before going to the polls, and the visit of a canvasser may prove decisive here.

Some 6,000 activists were expected to go round New Jersey on November 8 to knock at the doors of houses of potential Democratic voters. Three waves of this "invasion" were planned – at about noon, at about 16.00, and at about 18.00. Besides, 2,000 activists were expected to phone potential Democratic voters.

I learned these figures at New Jersey's Democratic headquarters from Richard Gureghian, 34, a public relations man who had been dispatched here from Boston, where Dukakis's main headquarters were situated. What were both headquarters doing? Planning and holding publicity events is a multi-stage process with its own subtle division of labour. Short television films and literature were produced in Boston in a centralized way, whereas local activists mainly organized rallies and meetings with invited "stars." For instance, New York State Governor Mario Cuomo, Senators William Bradley and actors Joseph Biden, Robert Redford and Deborah Winner were invited when the campaign was drawing to a close.

I asked Richard Gureghian what was the difference between the Democratic and Republican campaigns. In his opinion, the Democrats work better at grass roots, that is, directly with the people. The Republicans prefer to communicate with their voters by mail, directly from Washington. They have more money and can send six to eight letters to each potential voter.

Ours is a more ubiquitous organization, Richard went on. I think personal communication is more effective. I don't want to sound cynical, but I must say that a typical Republican voter is a "bourgeois" – a WASP – white, Anglo-Saxon, protestant. People of this kind are most likely to write a cheque for the party fund so that they are not disturbed and their precious time is not wasted. The Democrats have more young people, idealists, and students in their ranks, Gureghian noted.

"But you are obviously behind. What are you counting on?" I asked him.

Richard Gureghian replied that the Democrats were counting on winning 18 key states: New York, California, Ohio, Texas, Illinois and New Jersey, and some others. These major states have the largest number of presidential electors, he said. By taking them, we shall assure ourselves of more than half of the electors, and the White House will be ours.

The hopes of the Democratic strategy planners failed to materialize. The Demo-

cratic presidential and vice-presidential candidates won only ten states and the District of Columbia. In a situation where the South and the West are considered Republican strongholds, the Democrats simply did not have another plan of campaign. Incidentally, their strategy may work next time.

The United States has indirect presidential elections. In fact, Americans vote for electors, and the principle "winner takes all" is very tricky. For instance, in the largest state, California, votes were divided almost equally between the Republican and Democratic candidates, but thanks to a slight margin George Bush took all 47 electors of that state. A similar picture was also to be observed in some other major states. So the Democrats can either torment or console themselves with the thought that, were the balance to tilt slightly in their favour, the situation would be entirely different.

The comparison of the Republican and Democratic polls reveals interesting combinations. George Bush won seven million more votes than his rival. It was calculated, however, that if Dukakis had picked up 700,000 more votes than he did in key states only, he would have taken over half the electors.

I also listened with great interest to Richard's remarks about the Democrats' main **social** objective in the election campaign. It is called "Reagan Democrats."

Each party has more or less solid electoral support. There are also independents. Unfortunately for the Democrats a considerable number of Americans who traditionally support them voted for Reagan in the last two elections. The Democrats could count on a victory only by winning back this section of the electorate.

I asked Richard how he would describe a typical "Reagan Democrat," and he produced a chain of indications. It is usually a blue-collar worker who has a house and savings, is afraid to use credit cards, and keeps his money at home. He is aged 40 to 50, has two or three children, one of them for the first time in the family's history studying at college. His people are recent immigrants, he lives in an ethnically homogeneous environment, and shares his community's racist views. He is disturbed by the scale of crime, responsive to calls for "law and order," considers himself a patriot, and favours "strong defence" and other slogans of the kind. There are not a few war veterans among them. However, they have forgotten what they fought for, Richard concluded sarcastically. They are vulnerable in many respects, and therefore they lean towards strength. This explains why Reagan has become their hero.

Dukakis won back some of the "Reagan Democrats," but not enough for a victory. In the next four years, that is, till the next elections, it will be interesting to analyze why men favoured Bush and women Dukakis, why nine out of ten blacks voted for Dukakis and most whites favoured for Bush, why most Protestants preferred Bush and Catholics Dukakis. There are plenty of data on that score.

I haven't made up my mind yet. I like Dukakis' makeup, and he photographs well, but the Bush publicity clips are also fun to watch...

From Atlanta Constitution

A financial expert vs. a former general and soccer player

I mentioned two floors of a former furniture store in New Brunswick, where the headquarters of two Democratic campaigns were situated. The Democratic presidential race was directed from the first floor and the contest for seats in Congress and governors' posts from the ground floor.

In New Jersey, Senator Frank Lautenberg, a Democrat, fought for reelection against Peter Dawkins, a Republican. It was a hot contest. A U.S. senator is a national figure. He conducts his activity in Washington, where he deals with financial and budget, social and economic, foreign policy, military and other issues of nationwide importance. But he is elected in his home state, and therefore the local base proves a decisive one. It is dangerous to upset this fragile and delicate balance.

Peter Dawkins, 50, turned out to be a formidable contender. A career army officer, he served in Korea and Vietnam and, at the age of 43, was promoted to brigadier general. He studied at West Point Military Academy and at Oxford and Princeton universities. Besides, he was a famous soccer player in the past. On retiring from the army, Dawkins spent the last five years on Wall Street, having earned millions of dollars. His financial and political successes can evidently be attributed to his work as assistant to the deputy secretary of defence in the last years of his military career. In any case, the Republican leaders of New Jersey had invited Peter Dawkins to run for the Senate from that state against Frank Lautenberg, a Democrat, who had held the seat for one term.

Frank Lautenberg is also a man of merit. The most popular image in America is that of the self-made man, and Lautenberg is precisely that. A boy from a poor family, a GI during the Second World War, a graduate of a little-known college where he was granted a scholarship as a war veteran, he has a remarkable aptitude for technology combined with an unusual grasp of problems.

Lautenberg was a co-founder of an ad-

vanced electronics company which, 30 years later, became the world famous Automatic Data Processing Corporation. The fortune of its co-founder was estimated at 40 million dollars. Four years ago, at the age of 60, Lautenberg radically changed his line of business. He gave up his profitable occupation to run for the Senate.

A financial expert contesting against a retired general and former soccer player. In the television war of images, the Republican contender had an advantage over Lautenberg. But he also had weak points that the Democrats did not fail to exploit. Peter Dawkins, who appeared in the state under a year ago, was only a rising political "star." As for Lautenberg, he did not waste his time during his first term of office.

Thanks to the Democratic majority in the Senate, he was elected chairman of two influential subcommittees responsible for the federal funding of transport construction (airports, highways and railroads) and the recovery of the polluted environment. Since New Jersey has the biggest dumps in the country and all roads from New York pass through it, Lautenberg had a wide field for action. Taking decisions on allocations and proposing one or other legislative measure, the chairman of the two subcommittees always remembered who elected him to the Senate. New Jersey has obtained a considerable slice of the federal pie.

The Senator chose a very apt motto, "Lautenberg puts the state first." The election campaign developed into a contest between the barnstorming shows of Dawkins and the popular service record of Lautenberg. Business interests prevailed, and the Senator won.

On the whole, the Democrats have gained a majority both in the Senate and in the House of Representatives. It is not the first time that such a situation has arisen in the American power system. More Americans preferred to vote for a conservative in the White House and for liberals in the Senate or in local government. Anyway, the Democratic majority in Congress will hamstring the Republican President. Not a few Americans believe that a similar division of power is a guarantee against extreme decisions.

The bottle bill

In addition to four contenders for one seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, the voting list in Pennington included two candidates for the office of sheriff, six candidates for the three seats on the board of Chosen Freeholders, and two candidates for two seats (that is, without a contest) on the general council.

Moreover, voters had to express their opinions on six issues of sufficient public importance to have been submitted to a referendum within the bounds of the state or county. The wording of some of them was so complicated that they were accompanied by a popular explanation of what a "yes" vote would mean.

Voters were asked to allow the state authorities to distribute bonds for a $350 million loan to fund the building of new and the modernization of existing schools and colleges, including computer classes.

They were also asked to approve amendments to New Jersey's Constitution concerning a new procedure for filling vacancies in the state legislature, a veteran's deduction and a senior or disabled citizen's deduction to any eligible shareholder of a cooperative or mutual housing corporation, and a procedure for submitting issues for a referendum.

Two further issues had been raised by Mercer County: a proposal to control local taxes, and a bottle bill ordinance. The bill will petition to have a mandatory refundable deposit of 10 cents on all recyclable aluminium and glass beverage containers and 25 cents on all plastic and mixed-material beverage containers. Beverages covered by the proposed ordinance include milk, beer, wine and soft drinks. Glass and metal or plastic scrap are dumped in large quantities. The bill would put an end to this waste, as, if adopted, it would encourage people to return empty bottles and cans to retail stores and the latter to take them to recycling centres.

The bottle bill ordinance met with fierce resistance. Last year its sponsors collected 30,000 signatures (15 per cent of registered voters) to get it included on the ballot papers. Its opponents tried to prove that the bill was unlawful and brought an action against it. The case was heard in the New Jersey Supreme Court, and the charge was rejected. An anti-bill campaign was then launched in the media. The bills' opponents, who representated industry and trade, unwilling to handle empty bottles and cans, had collected almost 400,000 dollars for their campaign, while the proponents were able to raise less than 25,000 dollars.

The bill was not approved, but its advocates do not consider it a final defeat. They are talking about their "moral victory." They managed to draw public attention to the issue, and the struggle is therefore continuing.

The chronicle of local referenda is rather curious.

Arizona, Colorado and Florida have passed bills declaring English the only official language in those states, as distinct from the proposal to make English and Spanish the two official languages in view of the large Spanish-speaking population.

In California, voters approved a law imposing strict control on insurance companies. The companies had spent 75 million dollars, agitating for compulsory car insurance. But this did not help them. They are going to lose a fifth of their profits. Voters also turned down the demand that the names of AIDS patients be made public.

Maryland has confirmed a new law banning the sale of cheap pistols. The powerful National Rifle Association and other advocates of free possession of arms had spent five million dollars in an attempt to kill the bill, but they failed.

The population of Massachusetts have voted against the closure of two nuclear power plants in their state.

In different cities voters expressed their opinions on such issues as a tax on cigarettes and smoking in public places, more humane treatment of animals, oil drilling near beaches, the terms for basing the cruiser Missouri in a city port, and so on.

Voters' imaginations are not in the least exhausted by these issues, the amiable Helen Bertoni told me at the polling station. Besides the approved list of candidates and issues, each of them can enter a new name or proposal. The machine has a special slot for this purpose. "Do voters often use this right?" I asked. "Oh, yes," Helen replied. "Some of the ideas are very original. For instance, 'Mickey Mouse for President'!"

PENNINGTON – MOSCOW

Helping the boys to come back

Representatives of the International Committee for the Rescue of Russian Prisoners of War in Afghanistan have visited Moscow.

During their stay in Moscow, the members of the International Committee met with representatives of the Soviet Red Cross, soldiers who had fought in Afghanistan, and members of the U.S.S.R. Public Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Soviet servicemen Captured in Afghanistan. It was decided that the International Committee will not only continue to negotiate with American politicians, but will also try to arrange a meeting of its members with the Soviet POWs who are now in the United States, so as to assure them that they've been amnestied and can return to the Soviet Union without fear. It was also planned to sponsor a trip of the POWs' mothers to the United States, and to make a new attempt, together with the Soviet committee, to get Pakistani visas and hold direct talks with representatives of the opposition groups in Peshawar...

Bernard Mandelbaum and Dmitry Venediktov, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Alliance of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the U.S.S.R.

Michael Harter, Editor of the Catholic magazine America, Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum, President of the Foundation for Future Generations and Barry Farber, an American radio newscaster, came to Moscow on a mission of charity. These men are not exactly friends of the Soviet Union, which is why the first thing I wanted to know was what had moved them to join the International Committee. The Rabbi answered:

"I am an old friend of the painter Mikhail Shemyakin. His secretary phoned me one day to inform that he intended to set up and subsequently head a committee for the rescue of your boys. Would I care to help? 'But of course!' I don't know the nationalities of your POWs. Perhaps there are some Jews among them, but that is not what matters. Every man has a whole world in him, and when three hundred worlds are deprived of normal existence, it's intolerable..."

Barry Farber became well known in America for his reports of the Vietnam war.

"These two wars are both similar and different," he says. "The difference is in people's attitudes towards them. In the U.S. we had a mass anti-war campaign, so when we pulled out of Vietnam, our people knew those responsible for information on the missing persons by name. Americans had contacts with the Vietnamese government, established as part of the anti-war protests. In your country this is unthinkable. However, I'm staggered by how little you're doing. I think we Americans could help you," Barry Farber went on to say. "There are people in the United States, and in the present administration for that matter, who have long maintained contacts with the Afghan opposition. The very existence of the opposition groups depends enormously on these people, and now that we have a new administration, we could enlist the help of these people, in contacting the mujahideen and demanding the release of your POWs; if the rebels have a stake in a free Afghanistan, they have to behave as civilized people. In the civilized world POWs return home as soon as the war ends... In the early days of the Reagan administration, the President managed to bring home from Iran 150 American hostages. Now the situation in the world has changed and it's time to think globally. It would be great if George Bush decided to mark the beginning of his presidency with the release of the 300 Soviet POWs being kept by the mujahideen. There are also other forms of leverage, and I am not sure which of them will finally prove effective. It could happen that all of them will have the desired effect. But eventually all your soldiers will return home. I am an optimist."

"Our Committee negotiated with members of the administration and the Pakistani envoy to the U.N.," chimed in Rabbi Mandelbaum, "but unfortunately our efforts fell flat. So we decided to come to the Soviet Union. I think God Himself wants to help us, since Pakistan now is to have a new government."

The American guests declined an invitation to a rally in front of the Pakistani embassy scheduled for November 24. The International Committee feared that the rally could turn into an outburst of protest. No one was sure if the new Pakistani government would not regard the rally in this way – as a demonstration of anger and protest. That is why it was decided to cancel the action on the eve of the rally.

But it was too late: people from all over the country – from Murmansk, Odessa, Bryansk, Yakutsk – were coming to take part in the rally, which actually was quite peaceful. Three women – mothers of soldiers missing in action – and a former soldier who fought in Afghanistan met with the Pakistani ambassador and handed over a petition to the Pakistani government.

Will this action, as well as other measures by the Soviet and American public, help bring our boys home? Hopefully, yes. But I agree with Andrei Lagunov, formerly a soldier in Afghanistan and now a member of the All-Union public initiative group, whom I met during the visit of the members of the International Committee, when he said that he hoped we could now rely on the good will of the Pakistani government, and on its help in organizing direct talks with the mujahideen.

Irina Lagunina

Photo by V. Panov

...When this article was ready, we were informed that Soviet diplomats had met with representatives of the Afghan opposition at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. At last diplomats have started to act. Perhaps their efforts will succeed.

It all depends on us

If someone today made up his mind to reprint the young Marx's well-known treatise on the freedom of the press he would certainly have trouble finding a publisher. Why? Because we still experience doubt and anxiety about everything that has to do with human rights. Some sense of apprehension and treading on slippery ground persists in us. Few question the need to observe human rights. But when we turn to the civil and political rights listed in international agreements, a great many questions arise. Is it really necessary to grant everyone the right to leave the country freely, and as freely to return? Is it necessary for the sake of freedom of information to stop jamming foreign radio broadcasts, do away with the index of forbidden books, and make banned literature available to everyone, and not just to a select few, and get any department, including the Ministries of Defence and Justice, the Ministry of the Interior and the KGB, to give citizens access to large amounts of information which to this day is considered confidential?

What if making all these rights statutory is damaging to the national interest? This argument too seems to carry weight with us, as it is customary for us to sacrifice personal interests for the good of the country... Do we not live in a socialist state which can, as no other, take care of each individual? There is therefore no cause for concern about guarantees of our own rights...

Our tragic historical experience is evidence, however, that some error has insinuated itself into the above reasoning. Now we know how the repressive state apparatus, in the absence of guarantees of individual rights, controlled people's destinies. That was how the formula that the interests of the state come before the interests of the individual evolved in practice. This formula is alive and well in the public consciousness, which still does not recognize the sovereignty of any personality, in social practice or in law. We have yet to work out a consummate concept of human rights, their implementation and guarantees. This concept should be underpinned by the long-standing axiom that the dignity of man can never be sacrificed to the interests of the state. And do not be afraid to recognize the formula that human rights are absolute, while state interests are relative.

The 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights seems an appropriate occasion on which to ask ourselves what should be done.

First and foremost, we should know that we have rights and freedoms and act accordingly.

Is this not starry-eyed idealism, however? Is there a single country among those that signed the Universal Declaration 40 years ago that can boast full and complete observance? There is none. The degree of non-observance varies from state to state, however. In a civilized country a developed system of democratic institutions, including the independence of the courts and firm control over the law-enforcement agencies, make it possible for society to reduce human rights abuses to a few individual cases which become known to the general public and which it condemns.

Awareness of one's rights should be instilled from childhood. Last week the seminar on human rights and the administration of justice sponsored by the United Nations was held in Moscow. Participants spoke of the need to introduce human rights as a subject on the school curriculum.

The subject should be studied from the early years at school, when the child will realize for the first time that he and his companions in class and at play are entitled to certain rights, which should be respected. The U.N. Commission on Human Rights has long had teaching aids for all school grades. These aids are a supplement to the national human rights text-book. We have no such text-book, while the teaching aids probably exist in a single copy in the U.N. Information Centre which, among other instituions, is stationed in Moscow.

High school teachers, when analyzing the constitution, should be encouraged to give special emphasis to human rights and see to it that senior-formers know about the existence of international human rights standards. The contents of these well-known standards are to be found in international treaties, covenants and agreements, most of which have been signed by the Soviet Union. These documents are impossible to find in this country either, as they have hardly ever been printed, despite the need for each individual to be familiar with them. This is the duty of the government. To mark the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration, our lawyers intended to have a complete collection of human rights documents at last printed . What do you think has come of it? Nothing. The manuscript is gathering dust at the publisher's, the reason given being shortage of newsprint.

Talking about human rights with school children is not at all easy. Examples should be cited. The traditional approach is to look for the examples in the practice of other countries. Pupils, however, will look on their teachers as hypocrites should they confine themselves to finding fault with others. The teacher should primarily cite examples from the history of his own country, as then the course will assume the strength of proof and bring home to young people what human rights abuses can lead to.

To confine the problem to knowledge of rights is certainly not enough, as this is passive knowledge, while we need an active attitude to the issue, whereby a person is capable of using his rights and defending them. To this end we need the appropriate social institutions capable of providing aid to the individual (for example, in Poland it is a human rights officer), advisory agencies to which people can turn for competent guidance (something of the kind has been set up in the G.D.R.), and independent public organizations and committees to oversee the human rights situation in the country. In this area too we lag behind.

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights holds specialized seminars throughout the world for law-enforcement agencies. What for? To train policemen to think twice before they break up a demonstration, beat up someone in their custody or charge an innocent party. The Supreme Court and Procurator's Office of the U.S.S.R. have declared through the statements of their top officers that the paramount task is protecting human rights. I wish the Ministry of the Interior would add its voice to theirs. That police forces are indispensable is a fact of life everywhere. Of course, they should be well trained. But training cannot justify harshness and brutality. And vice versa. The events in Baku, or any other situations in which policemen are victims of violence, cannot excuse, for example, the dispersal of the demonstration in Minsk, an account of which was given by Vasil Bykov. So our militia and Interior Ministry troops also need seminars on human rights.

We should learn from foreign experience (that is the conclusion of the participants in the round table meeting with American Congressmen. A report from it also appears in this issue). One should not, however, harbour the illusion that domestic problems can be resolved at international level. We must do this all on our own and at home, without hoping someone else will come to the rescue.

Leonid Mlechin

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АЭРОФЛОТ
Soviet airlines

Thrashing out the human rights concept

At New Times recently U.S. Congressmen met members of the Soviet Public Commission for International Cooperation on Humanitarian Issues and Human Rights. The transcript that follows will indicate whether this was a discussion, a dialogue or an exchange of information.

Fyodor Burlatsky, Ph.D. (Philosophy), Chairman of the Soviet Commission. Democratization and political restructuring help us to go a long way towards solving the human rights problem. One basic danger here is that of halfway solutions. It behooves us to avoid all that occurred during the "thaw" of the 1960s and strive for the consistent implementation in the U.S.S.R. of rights and freedoms and for the application of all practical achievements of world democracy.

We see involvement in the debating of bills as a paramount objective. We have our own stand on a range of issues pertaining to the renovation of the legal system. We are proposing that we have a jury court, that the death penalty be abolished, that the Constitution incorporate a section on human rights, as is to be seen in the appropriate international documents, and that some of the articles that may be invoked to harass people for convictions be deleted from the criminal code.

Last February we asked the Supreme Soviet to amnesty all "prisoners of conscience" and issued a statement to the press on the score. Our foreign colleagues furnished a list of some 200 names, though the authorities said there were only 75. By now only two persons are still in prison, all others have been released.

I feel I must say that the relevant statistics are most conflicting as various offices have their own tally. We get varied data from the procurator's offices, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. However, we are investigating every single case and hope the problem will be fully resolved shortly.

We also plan to visit prisons and institutions of corrective labour, and are prepared to invite foreign colleagues to go there with us.

We have received some 5,000 complaints from Soviet citizens concerned with such diverse issues as exit visas, the plight of convicts in confinement and of psychiatric abuses. Though we undoubtedly have few opportunities as all the members of our commission work on a voluntary basis and we have no paid staff, we try to deal with every single case and address the Supreme Court and the procurator's offices. In one out of ten cases we get results. Thus we have helped several people to emigrate.

Steny Hoyer, Congressman, Chairman of the Congressional Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Our Commission was set up in 1976 to monitor observance of the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. We investigate human rights issues at home, not only in other countries signatory to this document.

It is our conviction that there is a very close link between a country's human rights policy and its relationship with other countries. The Soviet foreign minister also acknowledged that recently. We were invited by the Supreme Soviet to come to your country to discuss human rights issues. It gives us pleasure to note the substantial progress made in this area, but there is still much more that needs to be done. We would like to be sure that your commission could signally contribute to an improvement here – just as our commission, which serves the same purpose in the U.S.A, does.

Dennis Deconcini, Senator. Certain promising changes have taken place in the U.S.S.R. One is the greater number of people allowed to emigrate. Another is the tangible freedom for religious worship, although I think it limited. A third is the Supreme Soviet's effort to draft new legislation. What sort of legal status does your commission have?

Fyodor Burlatsky. Our commission is an arm of the public Soviet Committee for European Security and Cooperation that was set up in 1971. Our powers are absolutely unrestricted and stem above all from the authority and prestige that our members, well-known scientists, writers and journalists, enjoy. Though we have no legal status, we are treated as a public team of experts by both the Supreme Soviet and the Ministry of Justice.

Our commission is reckoned with and whenever we invite people from the procurator's offices, the Ministry of Justice or the Supreme Soviet to our sessions, they turn up and furnish the information we want and answer our questions.

Dennis Deconcini. What powers do you exercise as regards inspection of institutions of corrective labour?

Victor Protasov, Corresponding

Fyodor Burlatsky:

"Avoid mistakes of the 1960s and halfway solutions."

Steny Hoyer:

"Substantial progress is to be noted, but there is still more to be done."

Dennis Deconcini:

"Society becomes stronger when it recognizes definite freedoms for the individual."

Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. We closely cooperate with the administration of institutions of corrective labour under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and have been met with understanding. The view taken of such institutions is currently being modified and a new approach, a new model, is being evolved. It has been decided to transfer to the Ministry of Public Health institutions to which alcoholics are confined for treatment. Talks are in process to have institutions of corrective labour for minors transferred to the educational offices. Hopefully an amnesty will be announced, affecting firstly all convicted for so-called "economic" offences.

We have reached an understanding with the camps administration as to visits to places of confinement and have even drawn up the respective schedule.

Ronald Lehman, Deputy U.S. Secretary of Defence. A paramount objective with you is involvement in the discussion of new bills. Do you get the rough drafts?

Fyodor Burlatsky. That is a sore point with us. The offices drafting new bills decline to make the working drafts available, preferring to provide us with finalized version.

However, recently I had high-level talks at the Supreme Soviet and was definitely assured that shortly we will get all working drafts.

Further, as professional jurists many of our members have been invited to participate in drafting bills.

Louis Laun, Deputy U.S. Secretary of Commerce. As far as we know the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet has set up a new commission to investigate violations of human rights in the U.S.S.R. Do you cooperate with that body?

Fyodor Burlatsky. We have proposed that the Supreme Soviet set up a standing commission of deputies on human rights and this initiative has been met with understanding. However, thus far the Presidium has only a working commission to examine complaints lodged over the denial of exit visas to leave the country for good. We are cooperating with that body as well.

Steny Hoyer. None of the Soviet refuseniks I saw said there was such a body. Does it have a permanent staff and reception hours?

Veniamin Yakovlev. LL. D. Certainly. It works according to a definite timetable and has already examined a good many appeals from persons denied exit visas.

Dennis Deconcini. One is hard to imagine all the suffering that people who want to emigrate feel. Each time I come here, I see that Soviet people are most friendly and hospitable, and I like your country. Still, whenever I meet people, who have been cast out of society only because they differ with the state, the impression is most grievous. Thus, yesterday I saw a person who, denied an exist visa for eleven years now, can't rejoin his family. Does that mean the state couldn't care less for the individual?

Steny Hoyer. We know that before the Millennium of Christianity in Russia you called on the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet to free everyone imprisoned for religious convictions. As a result a whole number of such prisoners was released. Is an amnesty for all "prisoners of conscience" on the drawing board?

Fyodor Burlatsky. Actually we interceded for a full amnesty, but the Supreme Soviet along with the Ministry of Justice had its own ideas and took the earlier approach to so-called dissidents, by examining each individual case.

John Porter, Congressman. We met deputies of the Supreme Soviet who say broader democracy and respect for civil rights will contribute towards the country's economic and political development. I think we should proceed from the rights of the individual, not of the state. I think your commission could take up the very important issue of formulating the concept of human rights which you do not have.

Fyodor Burlatsky. Our commission maintains that human rights are part and parcel of the rights of the individual and are of a general human content. We have always taken that stand and continue to energetically uphold that today.

The trouble is that though we had democratic attitudes in Russia's political culture, we did not have those liberal attitudes, which stem from the individual's independence and autonomy from the state. That is exactly what we are trying to inject into our political culture, our researches and our law-making.

Yet it cannot be denied that the active and free citizen is key to the activity of all of society and hence to society's economic and political development.

Dennis Deconcini. Society becomes stronger when it moves towards recognition of definite freedoms for the individual. We Americans wish the Russians well because we feel safer when that is the case. If the U.S.S.R. made its society and economy more open without changing its socialist system, emigration would dwindle, the economy would flourish and the public mood would improve.

William Richardson, Congressman. We have information as to 68 cases of the abuse of psychiatry. Has your commission investigated that?

Fyodor Burlatsky. Thus far very little has been done, although we are all worried and are discussing it. We have agreed to invite our leading psychiatrists to our sessions.

In the media we have already opposed such a diagnosis as "sluggish schizophrenia," as we think, most public personalities and socially active people generally may be thus classified.

William Richardson. You said that you got results in ten per cent of cases. What about the remaining 90 per cent?

Fyodor Burlatsky. Some 80-90 per cent of the complaints we get are about labour conflicts, housing and general living conditions, in short, what we could call socio-economic rights. We refer such complaints to the trade unions, the local Soviets and factory and office managements, advise the writers to take the matter to court should managements or authorities consider their complaints unfounded.

Our commission deals with infringements of civil and political rights.

Victor Protasov:

"The view taken of corrective labour institutions is currently being modified and a new model is being evolved."

Veniamin Yakovlev:

"Appeals from persons denied exit visas are now examined by the staff of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet."

John Porter:

"Your commission could formulate the concept of human rights, which you do not have."

Dennis Deconcini. Aware that in the West great heed is paid to the lot of every single person, whose rights are infringed, your state expects various concessions from us in response to his or her exit. Even when people leave, they feel they have been used to attract our eye. That is no doubt because they sought to leave long before the current changes in your society, and because expectations were dashed time and again. I see that those who do not wish to emigrate are more optimistic as they believe these changes will really make for a better life.

Steny Hoyer. I would like to ask whether it is right to demand an invitation for anyone who wants to emigrate? Can one be denied exit for knowing something secret? Can again the reluctance of one in the family to leave, serve as grounds to deny exit visas to the entire family?

Vladimir Kartashkin. LL. D. We have an operative Statute of 1970 that was amended in 1987, which deals with entry and exit. It says that Soviet citizen may go only for private reasons, for instance, to reunite with his family, marry, or bury a close relative.

As a jurist, I think that does not accord with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in which Article 12 entitles anyone to freely leave any country including one's own.

I have taken part in drafting the new bill on procedures for entry and exit to and from the U.S.S.R., which is currently being considered. It says that a Soviet citizen may go to any country without needing an invitation.

Steny Hoyer. Do any restrictions remain?

Vladimir Kartashkin. Article 12 envisages restrictions for reasons of state security, public law and order and respect for the rights of other persons.

The bill sets out a possession of state secrets as one such reason for denying exit. Drafting the bill we argued about the time limit for what one might term the "quarantine." Terms of 5, 7 and 10 years were mentioned. Our Institute of State and Law has suggested limiting the period to five years after which the respective individual may go.

Steny Hoyer. Can a denial be contested in a law court?

Vladimir Kartashkin. I regret to say that as far as I know, no provision has been made for that.

Fyodor Burlatsky. However I think our commission may still put across its point of view. I think that in this day and age of the scientific and technological revolution, even the most advanced technology grows so quickly obsolescent, that this time limit may be reduced to the minimum.

Steny Hoyer. With us in the U.S. we have no restrictions of that order. For instance, Dr Teller, father of the H-bomb, who possesses a vast amount of top-secret data may emigrate from our country any time he pleases.

Boris Raushenbak, Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. I think we canot get along without restrictions. However the law must graduate the degree of secrecy and accordingly, the "quarantine" term, for otherwise, the management of a factory or institute may take arbitrary action.

Steny Hoyer. I can give you a specific case of such abuse. One of your compatriots has not been working at a classified enterprise since 1968, but for 20 years now he has been denied an exit visa for that reason.

Boris Raushenbakh. I personally think that wrong. I get many letters about that. I found that some enterprises want exit visas to be put off for 25 years. We had another similar case concerning that 25-year term. We sent a letter to the Supreme Soviet Commission stating our point of view, that to deny an exit visa in this case was wrong. But we got no answer.

As far as I know, something similar is practised in the U.S.A. Thus when ten years ago I invited a friend from NASA to come to Moscow, the management of his firm forbade him to visit the U.S.S.R. and he could go only as far as Helsinki.

Steny Hoyer. Evidently NASA practises a policy of forbidding its staff to visit the U.S.S.R. However the U.S. administration has never denied an exit visa, except in one or two cases.

The paradox is that such leading Soviet scientists as Academicians Sakharov and Sagdeyev are currently visiting in the U.S.A., while dozens of other, ordinary folk have been denied that for many years now.

Victor Protasov. May I in turn ask whether the procedure for entry into the U.S.A. will be changed? Only recently representatives of our trade unions were invited but denied entry visas.

Incidentally, neither is U.S. immigration legislation that liberal.

Steny Hoyer. I first want to say that denial of entry visas to trade union representatives violates the Helsinki pact.

Secondly, entry into the country is indeed restricted, but there is not one international agreement or principle which would mandate a country to accept an endless number of immigrants.

I am convinced that most Soviet citizens prefer to stay in their own country and I do not think that as soon as they get the opportunity they will rush to the U.S.A. From the angle of human rights the basic thing is the opportunity to leave one's country and return.

Veniamin Yakovlev. Tell me please, why people who come to the U.S.A. from the U.S.S.R. to visit relatives are regarded as refugees?

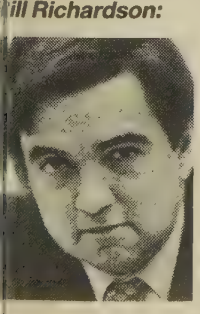
Steny Hoyer. The law entitles refugees to certain advantages.

Veniamin Yakovlev. The explanation does not appear to be legally convincing.

Fyodor Burlatsky. I think our conversations have been useful and instructive. You have come here to analyze our reality and are full of criticism and bias. But I am sure you are not quite happy with what is going on in your own country. We must engage in comparative analysis and explore each other's positive experience as that will be beneficial for all of us.

The publication was prepared by M. Shakina and V. Khilchevskaya

ill Richardson:

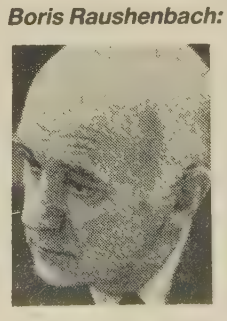


"We have information as to 68 cases of the abuse of psychiatry."

Vladimir Kartashkin:

"As a a jurist I think the operative entry-exit procedures do not accord with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights."

Boris Raushenbach:



"'Quarantine' is necessary. But for how long?"

The air we breathe

Yuri Shevchenko

The meeting of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet which has just ended attracted universal notice. This was because it discussed the conflict between the parliaments of the U.S.S.R. and the constituent republic of Estonia.

For the second time in a relatively brief period, thanks to television we have all been able to see how complex issues are debated in the country's highest legislative bodies, the essence of them pertaining to the national question, the relationship between the different republics and the federal structure. First this concerned the Caucasus; now it is the turn of the Baltic. These are new conflicts and the manner in which they are being debated and analyzed is also new. It is no easy matter to find the correct solution. Sometimes action is overdue, sometimes impetuous, sometimes misguided. Which is no doubt, perfectly natural, as the country is still only learning the ways of democracy and has yet to accumulate experience of civilized settlement of conflicts.

Yet what I would like to note first of all is that we are witnessing the search for appropriate solutions. In this respect, televized transmissions are more than merely symbolic: they are a form of glasnost. The entire country listened to the arguments and watched the people involved.

The time for bedrock unanimity is now in the past. In fact this was only a pretence that "everything was rosy in the garden." Some think perestroika and glasnost have caused these conflicts. That is not so. They had accumulated over the years and decades and have now erupted into the open, at times in a way that is deeply troubling.

However, though I am as anxious and concerned as the next man, I am happy to see that at last crisis situations are neither being swept under the carpet, nor played down. On the contrary, they are examined openly, from every angle, with all arguments and views taken into consideration. That is how it should be.

The substance of the conflict with regard to Estonia is as follows. Last November 16, the Estonian Supreme Soviet enacted a law that runs counter to several provisions of its own constitution, not to speak that of the U.S.S.R. as a whole. More specifically, according to the decisions taken, U.S.S.R. laws can enter into force in Estonia only after its own parliament has endorsed them. The same decisions proclaimed the land, the earth's bowels, the internal and territorial waters, coastal shelf and other natural resources, including the atmosphere, the republic's exclusive property. One can easily understand the concern Estonians rightly feel over a range of domestic issues. Like many other regions in the country, their republic was dictated to from central offices. Furthermore social troubles multiplied and ecological problems grew more acute. I see the powerful resistance to the arbitrary action of the central offices, the resentment which the Estonian Popular Front,too, is demonstrating, as cathartic.

However, the Estonian parliament's move is symptomatic of a tendency to isolationism, that conflicts with the spirit of Soviet statehood. Our state structure is the backbone of the country's uniform economic and social policy of the system for the rational deployment of productive forces, and of the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. Nationalism hears only its own voice and listens and listens only to its own arguments and reasoning.

Our country is the home we live in

It is now almost fashionable to say that perestroika and democratization are irreversible. But what leaps to mind is their fragility, the ease with which the framework of the structure that is being put up could be destroyed. Even when just demands are put forward the balanced character must not be overlooked. It must be realized that the problems that have accumulated over the decades cannot be resolved in one fell swoop by what a body of power or a meeting decides. We have realized that it is essential to undertake an in-depth political reform of society. This is taking place, as is illustrated by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet's twelfth session. It follows its own logic and its own stages, and here haste and extremism are out of place.

Equally fashionable today is the desire of all public forces to act "in the name" of perestroika. No wonder as it is indeed popular. Allow me to quote the objective, formulated by the Estonia Popular Front, to "transform the U.S.S.R. from a federal state into an alliance of sovereign states based on the principle of confederation."

It is one thing to seek to improve the state structure and bring the union of Soviet republics into harmony, and quite another to renounce the federal system. It is only natural to raise every kind of idea, even the most controversial, in a democratic state, and to demonstrate by means of constitutional procedure that this or that idea is essential – but never to impose it and, even less so, to put it forward as an ultimatum.

Indeed, an ultimatum cannot be democratic: on the contrary, it is diametrically opposed to democracy.

The anarchy of intolerance, and political and nationalist emotion, will only subvert the stability of the process of democratization an contaminate the air we breathe, air that belongs to all of us equally.

The air of perestroika is the air of unification, not fragmentation. It cements the forces of the peoples, their potentials and capabilities, their creative talents. Renunciation of that is completely out of the question.

We have looked forward for too long to the chance to take a hand in our own destiny. We have looked forward for too long to the chance to lead an honest, healthy life, and erect a law-governed, harmoniously ordered, genuinely socialist state as our common home, one built honestly and not encroaching on anyone's rights.

So let us cherish the chance we are being offered.

The Ministry of Finance and Robinson Crusoe

It has turned out that we have a state budget deficit

Our experts have certainly known all along that the U.S.S.R. government spends more money than it earns, and foreign experts even wrote about that. Nevertheless, the confirmation of this fact by the Minister of Finance came as a surprise.

The thing is that the Finance and Credit Dictionary was published four years ago under the editorship of the present Minister's predecessor. Here is a quotation from it: "Budget deficit – an excess of budgetary expenditures over receipts – is a factor in the development of the inflation process, an indicator of capitalist countries' financial crisis... The basic causes of the budget deficit are the further aggravation of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism, the growing economic instability of capitalist countries, the policy of the arms race... Budget deficit is made up for by means of state loans and paper money emission. At the present time, the bourgeois governments try to reduce the budget deficit chiefly through slashing social programmes. In socialist countries budget deficit occurs under extraordinary circumstances only."

Well, let us now see what kind of "extraordinary circumstances" have put us in such tight financial straits.

Obviously, the present Minister is not personally responsible for the budget deficit, but his financial "wizards" in general, have contributed to it.

The news that our government cannot make ends meet is a bit belated psychologically. Even as recently as a year ago it would have caused a great deal of public concern. By now, following a massive campaign to persuade public opinion to consent to a retail price rise (intended to make up for the authorities' patent failure to run the economy properly), the situation has changed. This is indicated, in particular, by a letter from a veteran of three wars published in the Ogonyok magazine (No. 46, 1988). In response to the news about the budget deficit the veteran accused the Ministry of Finance of anti-constitutional actions, i.e., of having violated the government resolution on paying back state loans. As we see, the sad condition the country's finance is now in causes public concern only as far as it exacerbates inflation, bad as it already is, and depreciates our earnings by putting even the basic foods and consumer goods beyond our reach.

In our case, budget deficit is a cause, rather than an effect, of economic troubles. It stems not from the fact that one of the world's richest countries is short of income; the trouble is that it spends too much.

The U.S.S.R.'s state budget revenues now constitute 71.4 per cent of the total national income. This means that "net" wages and salaries here constitute no more than 28.6 per cent of the national income: everyone works two hours a day for his own benefit, and six hour a day, for the benefit of the state. This is the legacy of the stagnation period. To compare, at the beginning of the stagnation period (1970) state budget revenues constituted 54 per cent of the national income, with every gainfully employed worker getting paid for half of his workday, the rest of his wages going to the state.

Under the circumstances, one can hardly expect all the people to go out of their way to increase the incomes of the state.

Industrial plants are not likely to be of much help in covering the budget deficit, either. Until 1965, they kept all the depreciation funds intended for the replacement of obsolescent basic production assets. Since 1965, the budget has been absorbing half of the depreciation funds (at an official estimate; actually, the proportion is higher still). As a result, less than two per cent of obsolescent basic production assets are withdrawn from the national economy annually. If we keep going at such a rate, the equipment put into service today will be replaced within fifty years from now, on average. As it is, we still use a lot of equipment half a century old. Our national economy, plucked by the Ministry of Finance, can hardly be expected to start producing more and better-quality goods and bringing in higher incomes overnight.

The Finance Ministry's proneness to eat its own goose has been manifested, in particular, in its attitude to the rise of the cooperative movement launched on the Party's initiative. The Minister of Finance came out against cooperatives despite Lenin's counsel. "A social system," he wrote, "emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class... At present we have to realize that the cooperative system is the social system we must now give more than ordinary assistance." Neither do our "financiers" accept many other things essential to the people's well-being. By the numerous money-raising campaigns now in progress one can judge about the problems which have cropped up and which the government is not willing to solve at its own expense.

All this looks strange, to say the least: how come that people supposed to be experts in their field have made such a mess of our finances? With practically all the national wealth under their control, don't they know how to balance the budget? Any housewife can do that! What's behind that: economic incompetence or an ulterior motive?

What should the Ministry of Finance be after? A balance, apparent at least, and a revenue. Well, after 1965 the Ministry has been increasingly depending for revenues not on consumer goods production and the service sphere, but on the sector of our economy which is literally a drain on the country's resources.

Indeed, isn't it "wiser" to deal with the heavy industry which accounts for more than 82 per cent of the total industrial profit and for almost a half of the total turnover tax, which is heavily billed for timber and water supply, for geological prospecting sevices, etc. – than to fool around with such trifles as the light and food industries? Or, with agriculture, which is working practically at a loss, and which requires no end of investments?

Or take capital construction: the contractor building organizations bring in almost 20 billion rubles in profit a year and, besides, the budget receives over 40 billion rubles a year as payments for fixed assets and the circulating capital?

As an old saying goes, he who pays the piper calls the tune. It is small wonder, therefore, that over the last fifteen years of the stagnation period alone, 1,544,200 million rubles were invested in industrial construction projects, with only 1,448,700 million rubles' worth of fixed industrial assets going into operation; this means that 95,500 million rubles were "invested" in unfinished construction projects which gave society nothing except deductions to the budget. Fixed industrial assets more than trebled on the whole. Over the same period the inventories increased 2.8–fold. Consequently, the payments for fixed and circulating industrial assets more than trebled, while the country's national income barely doubled over the same period (in per capita terms, the increase is even smaller – 70 per cent).

What the heavy industry turns out are intermediate rather than final products of the national economy. Therefore, the heavy industry's profits are not ready cash but a transitional value: the profit made by selling crude oil shows in the self-cost of gasoline; the profit returned by ferrous metallurgy – in the self-cost of machinery, and so on, and so forth. The budget deficit comes from our financiers confusing real money with "wallpaper."

Our current financial policy being what it is, the Finance Minister cannot really do anything about the budget deficit. A budget depending on the heavy industry and capital construction for revenues is doomed to deficit.

Capital investments divert manpower and material resources from the spheres of production and consumption for a long time. It would be plain common sense to restrict investments to reasonable limits. It's about time we learned by the mistake of Robinson Crusoe who chopped down a fine tree to cut a boat from, but did it so far from the sea edge that it would have taken him three years to dig a canal for the water to flow in and to get his would-be boat afloat. He was compelled to give the whole thing up, but no one feels like following his example here. We prefer to dig canals before we make up our minds about what we need them for, and whether we need them at all. This is exactly what our financial policy boils down to: we print paper money first, and think what to do with them afterwards.

Professor Anatoly Matlin,
D. Sc. (Economics)

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JUNIOR WORLD

A word for the teaching profession

The Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union has circulated a Russian translation of a Newsweek article by Melinda Beck on the prestige of the teacher's profession. Had the article dealt with a crisis of education in the United States, many Soviet periodicals wouldn't have hesitated to reprint it. But I have never come across any reference to the article, perhaps due to the fact that it actually described a sudden boom in the prestige of the profession in America. People are queueing up at employment centres for teaching posts. People are quitting their jobs to retrain to work in education. Many are moved to do so by moral considerations, believing that working with children is more satisfying than working, for instance, in business, and that today schools are badly in need of trained personnel. Moreover, the average wages of teachers have been growing at twice the rate of inflation. The increased prestige makes it possible to place greater demands on teachers. Academic showing at departments of education has substantially improved. In some states they have abolished the system of diplomas for life, and teachers now have to confirm their qualifications.

Perhaps we should follow good examples not only in the space programme, but in pedagogics as well? Isn't it time we thought about the prestige of the teaching profession in this country?

We used to assess a country's level of development on the basis of its steel or cast-iron output. Then this indicator was replaced by computers. Recently, they've started to suggest that the level of development is determined by the number of Nobel laureates. However, the most accurate and reliable earnest of advance is the attitude to the teaching profession. A country where teachers are respected and only the most talented people go to work in education is guaranteed prosperity.

In this country, ambivalent processes are under way. On the one hand, the prestige of the profession is undoubtedly on the up and up as a result of a gradual increase in wages and public recognition of a number of outstanding teachers (an unheard-of phenomenon). More people are applying for vacancies at teachers' training colleges. Many people, including young men, are becoming teachers, just as in the old days the *narodniki* went to the people to educate them.

On the other hand, one can't help but notice a contrary tendency. The teacher's prestige is taking some hard knocks; teachers are often snubbed, their initiative discouraged. Reports of perestroika in education read like military dispatches – every inch of progress has to be fought for.

We have already informed our readers about the hasty by-elections to the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences designed to remove the Academy from the line of possible critical fire at the all-Union Congress of Educationalists scheduled for December 20. Teachers denounced the decision, but the leadership of the Academy dug in. Prominent Academician Sergei Batyshev publicly threatened to leave the Academy if the elections were not held on December 15 (that is, before the congress). A clash seemed inevitable. But soon the news came: the elections are to take place after the congress. A victory? But many believe that the Academy, if it is necessary at all, should be created anew, without too much faith in today's Academicians. We are openly discussing this possibility, and meanwhile the leadership of the Academy seems determined to pursue its goal: to survive in the tempest of perestroika and consolidate its influence.

That is how it goes with the Academy. What about the congress? Initially it was announced that those elected as deputies two years ago are to retain their status. The teachers were indignant at this unwise decision. Under public pressure new elections were announced and held on November 15. Another victory? Here is what the newspaper Volzhskaya Kommuna from the city of Kuibyshev said: a mysterious commission was working behind the scenes at a regional teachers' conference. The commission selected 57 candidates – exactly according to the number of mandates. Some of them had 90 to 170 votes cast against them, but since there were no alternative nominees, the people selected by the commission were all elected to the congress. Thus only 17 of the 57-strong Kuibyshev delegation will be professional teachers. "This is not a congress of educationalists, but a congress of bureaucrats," said the deputies. "We are returning home in a distressed state of mind." Similar news is pouring in from everywhere. Inga Prelovskaya writes in Izvestia, in her article "Closed ranks of rectors..," that two thirds of the Moscow delegation, totalling some 50 people, are rectors, and the remaining third deputy rectors, party secretaries and managers. Perhaps the reader who sent us a short three-sentence letter was right in saying: "A proposal to the congress: Delegates from the bureaucracy should have a consultative voice only! Or the status of guests!" Now that ministers are no longer elected to the Supreme Soviet, who are rectors and principals to take their instructions from? Other rectors and principals?

And now news we have just received. NT No. 39 carried a Junior World article titled "Times are changing." The article said that Uchitelskaya Gazeta was going to be closed down and subscriptions were being accepted for a new weekly with a different name. The indignation of the teachers was tremendous. Hundreds signed petitions protesting against the closure. There were rumours that the whole business amounts to a covert attempt to punish the newspaper's staff and sack Editor-in-Chief Vladimir Matveyev who had incurred the anger of the powerful educational bureaucracy. Now the good news. Uchitelskaya Gazeta will live! Moreover, it is to be attached to the CPSU Central Committee. A special weekly will also be published for those working in higher education and science.

This is, of course, a triumph of common sense. But the message of a newspaper is determined not by its name, but by its editor-in-chief. We still don't know who will be in charge at Uchitelskaya Gazeta.

After completing this article, I go to a meeting of Moscow's writers and journalists. The single point on the agenda is the future of Uchitelskaya Gazeta.

Simon Soloveichik

An American expert on Soviet farming

Tips for agriculture

Peter Marcy

August 1988. It has been over a year since I have been to the Soviet Union. There have been some changes. Three things stand out in my mind. On the positive side, freedom of the press and freedom of expression, also a growing trend toward private enterprise under the name of "cooperative." Both are solid achievements for the government under Mr Gorbachev. On the negative side, there is the food crisis, particularly the critical shortage of meat.

I do not find much constructive use in joining the chorus of the critics who are confining themselves to the symptoms rather than the cause of the food crisis. Pointing the finger at individuals or organizations, farmers or bureaucrats, is not the answer. The real culprit is the "system," rules and regulations imposed in the 1930s which strangle the Soviet grain production and meat production. Doing away with the "system" or modifying it seems to create a nightmarish vision of chaos in the minds of those responsible for the management of the "system." However, experience has taught us that artificial restrictions put on the economy have always resulted in shortages and dislocations. This applies to wage and price controls, quotas and allocations and any other arbitrary measure interfering with the normal flow of supplies to market.

I will attempt to address myself to the grain and meat shortage by referring to my experience in the Kuban Region. I have been there four times but it wasn't until this last time that I discovered what I consider the basic cause of the agricultural disaster in the U.S.S.R. On previous occasions I had concentrated entirely on a specific project dealing with animal feeding. Last year, for the first time, I started to get into the pricing structure of Soviet grain in order to learn the actual costs of animal production. But that was only scratching the surface. This year in August, in the Kuban, I believe I finally found all the missing pieces of the puzzle which I had been trying to put together.Now I can also understand why grain harvest losses are so enormous, why there is a shortage of meat and why the quality of meat is so poor.

When you travel through the agricultural region of the Kuban you find a striking difference between what you see there and what you would see in a similar agricultural area in the Midwest of the United States. There is virtually no grain storage at any of the farms, whereas in the United States each farm has a great number of grain silos to accommodate the incoming crops. As an example, I visited a farm in Krasnodar Territory which covered an area of 10,000 hectares and probably grew a minimum of 20-25,000 tons of grain. The on-farm storage capacity did not exceed 250 tons. Therefore, all the grain would be transported to a state-owned elevator and sold to the state. However, it was not really sold, it was requisitioned at a fixed price under a quota system. Considering these circumstances, the farmer is only a contract worker for the state. He has no incentive to grow or harvest grain at maximum efficiency. He meets his quota and hopes the state will not increase the quota. To make matters worse, if the same grain farm also raises livestock, the farm or the feed mill which supplies its compound feed has to turn to the state and pay twice the amount for the same grain it delivered.

This year the state pays 56 rubles per ton for barley and 80 rubles for corn. And sells them back for 165 rubles. It buys wheat for 90 rubles per ton and sells it back for 180 rubles. Assuming that drying, cleaning, moisture and impurity losses and handling account for 20 rubles per ton, this leaves the bulk of the profit of growing grain with the state and not the farm. What can one expect under these circumstances?

Simply renting land to individual farmers or cooperatives for fifty years is not the answer. Would it not be more constructive to permit farms, state, collective or cooperative, to keep all the grain they need for livestock feeding, rent them storage space at state elevators at reasonable rates, extend them loans to build farm storage and buy sufficient equipment? Would that not encourage farms to raise productivity and efficiency which, in turn, would allow them to give greater benefits to their work force? More important, isn't that the way to solve the grain shortage which is costing the country endless billions of rubles in hard currency? In other words, get the government out of the grain business and permit the farms to integrate the grain, feed mixing and livestock production. This will result in lower costs and give the incentive for greater productivity. The present-day function of the state should be limited to the operation of oil seed processing and premix plants. At one point, when the integrated grain and animal producing farms have sufficient investment capital, they should also be in the position to acquire processing plants that fit into their system.

The next issue is meat production. Again, state interference has limited both quantity and quality production. The state sets a quota of 70 per cent of the output which has to be delivered to the state at a fixed price. The state buys animals by weight and not quality. Consequently, the hog producers raise their animals to a weight of 120-130 kilos, instead of 100 kilos. This lengthens the growing cycle by 50-100 per cent and produces a fat hog of poor-quality meat. More grain is consumed because the bigger the animal the more it consumes, fewer animals are grown because of the longer feeding cycle and the consumer has to pay the price of meat for excess fat. The way to correct this is to do away entirely with the quotas system. The state can set a support price at which it will only buy lean meat or so-called "bacon pigs," but no other and inferior grade.

This leaves the animal producer the choice to go to the free market or sell

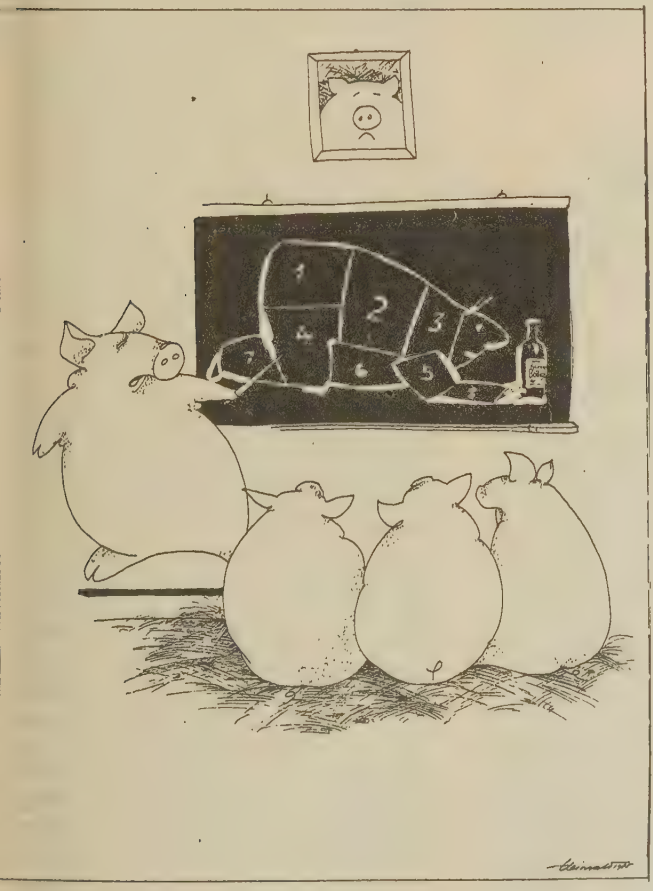
only high-quality meat to the state. If he opts for the free market, you will soon see that market collapse from its present level of 7-10 rubles per kilo as ever greater supplies will create a surplus on the free market. If he accepts the price of the state, he can only deliver high-quality meat.

The producer is not penalized. He has a lower cost of grain, less transportation expenses and every incentive to raise productivity both in grain and animals. Consumers will find more meat and better-quality meat. As supply and demand come into balance, the prices will settle at an acceptable level, far below today's free market price. Meat may not be quite as cheap as it is in state stores today, but then, there is no meat in state stores, anyway.

In order to give this new approach a chance to work, the following prerequisites have to be met. In the first place, the state has to provide or lease to producers the necessary slaughterhouse facilities, refrigeration and transportation, in order to assure adequate distribution. There can be no distinction in priority regardless of whether the producer is a state farm, collective farm or cooperative farm. The objective is to get the maximum supplies to market. Secondly, the state will need to focus its attention on supplying livestock producing farms with the necessary quantities of protein oil seed meals and feed additives in order to provide a properly balanced feeding ration to animals which will achieve the maximum amount of meat in the shortest period of time. In the third place, state and collective farms should rent their existing facilities to cooperative farmers if these facilities are not fully utilized.

Realistically, the changes I propose should be introduced gradually on a region-by-region basis with the order of priority starting in the areas of the most concentrated grain and livestock production. The experience gained through such a step-by-step transition will prevent a major disruption in logistics and distribution.

The Soviet government is intent on making perestroika work because the present stagnation cannot continue without encountering major social upheavals. However, the courage must also exist to take the necessary steps to dismantle all the restrictions which stifle production. A farmer who works for the state is working for an absentee landlord who extracts his tribute without looking at the true potential. It is impossible and unrealistic to expect that any individual or group sitting in an office in Moscow can make the right decisions at the right times with respect to such a vast segment of the economy as agriculture. Soil and weather conditions vary enormously within a country as huge as the Soviet Union. Under these conditions, given the proper incentives, the farmers are the best judge as to what to plant, when to plant, how to protect the harvest and how to extract the most from their soil. But that is not going to happen under the present system. The grain and food shortages will go on and on. The question is, which is more important, abundant food or ideological gibberish supporting a failed policy.



Drawing by Hillar Heinsalu

These are harsh words but I doubt that I am the first one who has ever spoken up about the cause of failure and the possible remedy of the present farm and livestock industry. It is necessary for the people who live in the cities and work in the factories and stores to understand why the government will need to do things which in the past were criticized as being too capitalistic. What is wrong with providing the farmer with the incentive in order to stimulate his initiative when it is for the benefit of the country? It does not lessen the authority of the government or interfere with the political process. Liberalism is not a disgrace, but reactionary thinking is counterproductive. From a political point of view, the whole world would like to see a healthy and progressive economy in the Soviet Union which will replace military competition with economic competition.

Assuming my ideas could be translated into action, the state would still retain a major role in the agricultural economy but in an area where it is best qualified. Only the state has the economic resources to provide for the education of more agronomists and market-oriented farm economists. Only the state has the financial means to support the development of modern technology in animal husbandry, feeding methods and soil usage. The purpose is to make agriculture an asset to the Soviet economy rather than a drain on its financial resources and, as I have stated before, a well-fed people is more willing and capable to make the necessary adjustments in the restructuring of the industrial sector.

Hopefully, it will be understood that the thrust of my words is directed against an unfair and destructive system and not against the people who are held captive within this system. ■

No picnic for new premier

National Assembly elects Miklos Nemeth Prime Minister

When the Hungarian national party conference elected Karoly Grosz, the head of the country's government, to be General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) last May, it was decided that he would combine these two high offices only until the end of the year, and then hand over the premiership to his elected successor. This was done at the Hungarian parliament's session in Budapest on November 24-26.

Major changes occurred while Karoly Grosz was at the head of the Hungarian government. Steps were taken to implement the reform and these won international backing. Of course, the process has only just begun, and time is needed to complete it. A consistently tolerant attitude must be shown towards conflict situations and every effort must be made to win through. Addressing parliament, Karoly Grosz noted that "we must take care that our dream of and desire for new ways, our justly felt impatience, do not develop into ungovernable anarchy. Today this danger looms large, inasmuch as the complete negation of past values, demagogy deriving from unpreparedness or nursed by personal ambition, and a lack of restraint may at times cause us to swing that way. As I see it, some are unaware of this danger. The historic responsibility devolving on parliament is both to give scope to the reform and to maintain public law and order. Otherwise the results of our people's creativity may suddenly fragment and Hungary's reform movement may be blocked for decades to come."

In his maiden speech as premier, Miklos Nemeth emphasized the need to continue the reforms. "We must," he said, "lay a long-term foundation for prosperity in the economy, society and politics. By this foundation I mean the law-governed state of today, which would serve as a bridge, i. e., a stronger alliance with the Soviet Union and open links with the West; a socialist market economy, with competition creating conditions for quality output, initiative, preparedness for renewal and for a system of institutions of socialist pluralism that will pervade society from top to bottom and be expressed in diversity of political views; a social relationship based on understanding and social solidarity."

The division between the two major functions of party and national leadership will enhance the government's independence while enabling the party's General Secretary, considering the aggravated economic and political situation, fully to focus on the party's objectives.

Miklos Nemeth was born on January 24, 1948, into a famer's family. On graduating from Budapest's Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences, he taught there before accepting in 1977 the job of deputy chief of sector at the National Planning Office. In 1981 he transferred to the staff of the Central Committee of the HSWP, first in the sector for economic policy, of which he subsequently became deputy chief and then chief. In June 1987 he was elected Secretary of the party's Central Committee, and last May a full member of its Politbureau.

He is married, with two sons, and plays tennis for relaxation.

The National Assembly also heard a report on elaborating plans to reorganize the system of political institutions and note legislative tasks. When discussing, before parliament opened, proposals to modify certain provisions of the country's Fundamental Law, the Central Committee of the HSWP concluded that the work being done to revise the Constitution and draft the concept of a new constitution accorded with the decisions of the Party conference. Yet the political demands of society made it vital to draft a range of laws that would also effect constitutional provisions. The Central Committee backed the government's initiative that parliament amend some articles in the constitution.

Addressing parliament in this connection, Imre Pozsgay, a member of the Politbureau and minister of state, said: "It is necessary to present the new draft constitution within the current legislative cycle before 1990." "It is necessary," he emphasized, "unhesitatingly to draft projects for an overall radical reform bearing on the social relationships of ownership and distribution and the relationships of authority," inasmuch as "without reforming ownership relationships democracy will lack social and economic mainstays.

In the debate, many delegates emphasized that the party's leading role, a role based on socialist pluralism, was the sine qua non for effective democracy. This was stated in response to a proposal from one deputy to "evolve a planned and limited multiparty system," to "convene the National Assembly in order to endorse the new constitution," and to "effect radical and sweeping reorganization within the state and party leadership."

While demonstrating approval for the fact that this issue had been raised, Imre Pozsgay said at the same time that it was not the government but society itself that established parties in accordance with constitutional norms.

The National Assembly endorsed the austerity programme for stabilization, whose implementation will reorganize the economy in a manner serving to reduce the lag behind world economic levels. It is obvious that the new prime minister has difficult tasks before him. Hungary's vast debt, which runs to 17 billion dollars, tends to lower living standards, perpetuates technological backwardness and greatly complicates the implementation of the programme for stabilization.

Ferenc Varnai
BUDAPEST

A Changing Havana

From our own correspondent
Vitaly Sobolev

I will not say that cranes are a feature of Havana. Only at rare points do they break the city skyline, so a bird's eye view of the capital is unlikely to give an accurate idea of the dimensions that construction work has assumed there over the past year or two.

On Havana's Street B, between Streets 3 and 5, which cross it at right angles (though the names are prosaic, they are practical and make finding one's bearings easier), construction work is in full swing. Some two dozen people are filling in a vacant lot, or rather a space between two old buildings, with brick and concrete structures. They potter about among piles and heaps of building materials from early morning till late evening, working overtime part of the night, sometiems on Saturdays and especially Sundays. The team leader, Luis Monterrey, a dark-complexioned Hercules of about thirty, a doctor by profession, told me that by next spring they expect to have finished this project, which is to be a five-storey house with thirty apartments for the accommodation of the people who are currently building it, all of them, like Monterrey, laymen in the construction trade.

One is bound to stumble on something similar in almost every district of the city, if not on every street. Havana is becoming younger and lovelier, with new buildings going up mostly thanks to the joint efforts of their future tenants. In Cuba they have their own way of applying this method, which, as well as its obvious merits, has no less conspicuous shortcomings.

Old Havana

The Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier called the country's capital "the city of columns." Indeed, its architecture abounds in examples of this style bequeathed to us by ancient and Moorish craftsmen. It is not inopportune to point out that in tropical regions this design does not seem as extravagant as it does in cooler latitudes. Serving, for instance, as a link between indoors and the open air, columns help ventilate the inner quarters of the building.

One in five Cubans, of a population of ten million, lives in Havana. This seems quite a high proportion, though on the eve of the revolution the population of the capital accounted for a quarter of the nation's six million.

Some Havanans, I notice, experience a sentiment akin to jealousy towards the rest of the country's population whenever their comparative contribution to the revolution is mentioned. It came to the capital, as it were, from the outside, from the Sierra Maestra, small towns and villages in the provinces. In the capital proper, the dictator had any action against the tyranny put down with special viciousness. In the opinion of the above-mentioned Havanans, however, the contribution of the capital to the cause and ideals of the revolution, as well as their participation in the insurgent movement, was of equal merit with anyone else's. The jealousy, I think, arose partly from the fact that in the postrevolutionary period most attention has been concentrated on, and most of the resources have gone into, the development of the provinces.

The capital of the country, as I have heard more than once, had to be "sacrificed," for the important reason that at the time it possessed a disproportionate share of the commonweal. In the late 1950s almost all social amenities available in the country were concentrated there, including health care (93 per cent of all hospital beds), higher education and so on.

Today provincial towns and settlements often look better groomed, with more efficient communal services and a supply pattern at least no worse than that in the capital. At the same time noticeable signs of neglect distinguish Old Havana, the district of old colonial buildings on the shores of the harbour, whose secluded position and depth of waters gave birth in the early 16th century to one of the major trade and industrial centres of the New World.

In those days convoys of ships loaded with the riches of the Americas, set sail for Spain from the harbour, which was linked with the sea by a narrow passage between limestone rocks on which stood fortresses bristling with cannon.

Among them were vessels that had slipped down the ways of the Havana shipyards. To this day the key in the city's emblem reminds us of the crucial position Havana held on the sea routes from the West Indies. A tiny fraction of the riches that accumulated in the city, the centuries-long toil of black slaves and free workers alike, have created what UNESCO recently recognized as a cultural asset of mankind.

The asset (Old Havana) is vast, with about a thousand buildings on a space of several square kilometres. Though built to last, buildings, like everything else, have their own life-spans. Once erected for the rich who subsequently wearied of the old part of the city because of its lack of verdure and streets that were too narrow for their automobiles, the houses were gradually deserted by their owners, who moved out to live in the suburbs, leaving Old Havana to their less fortunate fellow countrymen. That happened long before the revolution, which decisively put an end to social inequalities and changed the social pattern. Some marks of poverty do, however, persist in this huge architectural museum.

This was the subject of my conversation with Eusebio Leal, a prominent figure who is chief historian of Havana. His office is in the former governor's palace, a magnificent edifice built of natural grey stone, now the city museum. Leal's TV appearances, articles in the press and books, very emotional and expressive, succinct in thought and presentation, have greatly stimulated interest on the part of the people of Havana in the city's historical heritage. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of visitors to the museum has grown threefold to reach a million a year.

"In the late 1970s Old Havana was in a bad way," Eusebio Leal says. "In some places the state of disrepair could not have been worse. In 1981 an overall plan for its reconstruction was adopted. Though about a thousand people have been involved in the restoration work since then, that is, for almost seven years, and 40 million pesos have been spent, the results are barely perceptible. 48 houses have been rebuilt and work continues on the restoration of 42 more. There is a shortage of some building materials, hard timber, for instance, which used to be in abundance here. What we import from Africa will hardly do with our humidity level; we buy some from Mexico and Nicaragua, and also use pine from the Soviet Union after it has been seasoned. We need greater allocations to save what can be saved, as well as extra accommodation in hostels for people who have temporarily vacated their houses, taking into account that there are 73,000 residents in Old Havana. Lastly, we need much more labour.

Restoring buildings is delicate work, all of the thousand workers mentioned above being highly-skilled professionals. Yet even in this business, which needs real craftsmen and artists in their own trade rather than mere construction workers, help from the collective effort of the people may well be necessary. The army gave a helping hand in the restoration of the old fortresses. Now Leal is offered more and more assistance by young volunteers and people from Old Havana, who have a vested interest in the project and can be relied on when more help is needed. Before their very eyes, the dust of centuries is removed and all sorts of shapes and colours come to life in the tiled roofs, covered balconies, galleries, porticos adorned with light wrought-iron grilles, glazed tiles, murals, carvings, moulding – the whole unique creation of past generations.

The overall plan

Those who are familiar with other Latin American capitals will probably agree that the most striking feature distinguishing Havana is that it is more human. There is no trace of slums here, arrogant car owners don't hog the road, and a view of the sea is not the prerogative of the elect. The general impression is that the city has been planned with a view to the comfort of its inhabitants and not to economizing on space or other like considerations. Havana's skyline is broken by a few skyscrapers, though buildings of average height predominate. The overall impression is of spaciousness: you don't feel cramped.

More than 50,000 apartments have been built in Havana since the revolution, and the area of green plantations has grown 8-10-fold per resident of the capital. The state has begun to develop major industries - metallurgy, machine-building, petrochemistry, electronics – pushing old paper mills and breweries into the background. As a result of bad judgement and negative tendencies, to the elimination of which Cubans are now attaching so much importance, the acute housing and other problems in the capital were gradually approaching a critical point.

There are now approximately half a million apartments and individual houses in the city. About half of the housing is, Cubans say, inadequate or even substandard. Tens of thousands of homes need radical repairs. The need for new flats is estimated at least at 220,000.

The press describes the public transport situation as critical, consisting solely of taxis and buses. All vehicles are imported and since there is a shortage of hard currency, the appropriate agency is unable to arrange regular deliveries of spare parts. To crown it all, for want of drivers some cars and buses have to remain in garages during working hours.

Water is supplied with lengthy interruptions. Almost half of it gets to the city by force of gravity, and though the pressure in the pipes is not great, much of the water is wasted as the pipes are in an unsatisfactory condition.

Architect Mario Gonsalez of the Group for the Comprehensive Development of the Capital stresses that the gravity of the problems is to a large extent a legacy from the prerevolutionary city council. Immediately after the revolution, architects were set the task of drafting a schematic plan for the development of Havana. The problem was tackled by younger specialists, while their senior colleagues left the country. Though the authors of the plan had not had much experience, their project contained many sound ideas, Mario Gonsalez pointed out with satisfaction.

"In the early 1980s, however, a new scientifically grounded overall city plan became necessary," Gonsalez says. "Though we had chalked up some experience, we felt the need for qualified assistance. The Soviet Union sent in 15 specialists, and together with them after four years of assiduous work, we elaborated the plan for the development of Havana up to the year 2000 and overall guidelines for fifty years further on."

It is no easy task to implement the ideas set out in the plan. The above-mentioned low profile skyline of Havana has a negative side to it as it adds to the cost of the project to lay service lines for the city. Furthermore, the city as it is today consists of six separate districts not yet merged into an organic whole, each with its own different communal services. Bus traffic in Havana is erratic.

The plan provides for the construction of 4-5-storey buildings, the installation of water-supply and sewage systems, city-to-suburb train lines, the introduction of trolleybus service and, as a long-term project, a metro. But the plan does not elaborate on ways and means of doing all this.

Microteams

The Havana aqueduct was built in 1590, the streets of the city have been paved since 1780, and the first railway here was constructed in 1837. The gas pipeline began to function in 1848, the telegraph in 1855, the telephone in 1888, the tramway in 1901. Radio broadcasting was ushered in in 1922, television in 1950 and colour television in 1958.

Other facts might be cited too to show that Havana has always been abreast of the times. Never, though, has it had planned reconstruction like that undergone by Paris or Mexico.

Unfortunately, until recently the Ministry of Construction had to perceive all these tremendous projects purely theoretically. It had neither a sufficient work force nor the equipment to implement the schemes, or at least those that concerned social and cultural facilities and the housing. It had barely enough money for the building of projects for the national economy. True, there are a certain number of able-bodied men and women in Cuba who prefer to be unemployed, the calling of construction worker not being terribly popular, as is also the case in many other countries.

By a UNESCO decision, Old Havana has been announced a cultural asset of mankind. *TASS photo*

An answer was found in reviving "microteams," which were given this name, as Gerardo Rios, a leader of the microteam movement in Havana, explained, because at first they were smaller than ordinary state teams. With negligible exceptions the reverse trend now prevails, with 37,000 people working in Havana microteams as against 28,000 in those provided by the Ministry of Construction.

The movement was born in the 1960s when Fidel Castro, at a meeting with the collective of the Vanguardia Socialista metallurgy works, suggested to the workers that they build housing by their own efforts. As a result, a new housing development rose on the east side of the harbour. But with the passage of time, the microteam movement slowed down, along with the reductions in housing construction. The microteam movement continued to keep a low profile until the decision was made to revive it as part of the recently initiated process to eliminate mistakes and negative trends.

Gerardo Rios agrees that this movement is not an ideal way out. But in the present circumstances, when there are so many shortages in resources and facilities, this option makes it possible to gain the time needed to look for alternative ways of attracting more labour. At any rate, Cubans believe the movement to be gaining ground. This year microteams are expected to build in Havana 11,000 flats, twice as many as last year, 56 kindergartens, 20 polyclinics and 24 special schools for children with defective hearing and sight... They are also building flats for married doctors, shops, hairdressers' and barbers' premises, building material plants, stadiums and the EXPO-CUBA Exhibition, similar to our Exhibition of Economic Achievements. Then the plan envisages completing annually 20,000 flats right up to the year 2000, when the housing problem will thereby have been solved, and the time will have come to review the further development of the movement.

There is no single pattern for the formation of microteams. For the most part they are set up by party and other organizations at factories and offices. An extremely mixed composition is also possible. Teams are joined by pensioners, schoolchildren, housewives, people who just happen to live near the construction site. Microteams are also formed at universities and colleges. Even peasants from the countryside near Havana take part in the construction of public buildings in the capital.

Only the relatively few people in the movement who are skilled in the building trade draw wages, which are often paid by the organization in which the team member was formerly employed. Though his pay may be higher than that of a state-employed worker, the difference is made good, as Rios pointed out, by the amount, intensity and quality of work. If, for want of expertise, something goes wrong, they execute the operation all over again, as many times as need be. In general, microteams perform better on all counts than workers from the Ministry of Construction.

The only equipment on the construction site on Street B was a small concrete mixer and a pulley to lift heavy items. Larger construction projects have more and better machinery. The movement's special works manufacture winches for its needs. The production capacities of these enterprises are now being expanded to manufacture cranes in the near future. In the meantime, in addition to this machinery they also badly need ordinary spades and shovels. The people of Havana have collected building tools for the movement's needs. Early in April, for instance, in Guanabacoa district, microteams were given 13,000 picks, hammers, adjustable spanners, hacksaws and similar equipment. An old carpenter handed over the set of tools he used until he retired. The Caribbean fleet has handed the movement a twenty-ton truck crane. The supply of microteams with building materials is being carried out as a centralized scheme, though it too is not flawless.

As is evident, working conditions on microteams can hardly be called light. Nevertheless, says Rios, the movement is inundated with offers from volunteers. The collectives will not tolerate people who break discipline and do slapdash work, but expel them from the teams. But what is it that attracts people to the movement?

Factories or organizations that send their personnel to work on a construction project are entitled to fifty per cent of the housing built with their involvement. Thus the members of microteams will also have a share in the accommodation they build. Sooner or later the time comes when a member of such a team begins to build an apartment house in which, by the decision of a commission consisting of representatives from government and public organizations, he will be assigned an apartment, if, that is, he is entitled to one in accordance with the law and due to his labour achievements.

Microteam workers are always provided with comfortable hostel accommodation, have good canteens and, if necessary, meals delivered direct to the construction site. They grow vegetables and have begun to raise sheep on an area of some 360 hectares specially assigned to the movement.

But the main incentive, Gerardo Rios thinks, lies in the moral sphere, in the awareness of the importance of the work entrusted to them. This important area attracts special attention from the press, the public and the government, and is under the constant supervision of the party and the trade unions. The microteams show a fairly good pace in implementing the overall plan of restoring the country's capital.

HAVANA

An onlooker's view

Nina Smirnova,
D. Sc. (Hist.)

On November 29 Albanians celebrated the 44th anniversary of their liberation from fascism. The ordinary people hold sacred the memory of their dedicated struggle against the Italian and German occupiers. The young are brought up to revere the heroes of the national liberation saga of 1939-44. By turning to the glorious past, concern with current problems is kept at bay. "Yes, difficulties exist," the propaganda seems to suggest, "but they can be overcome. After all, our people have triumphed in far more difficult conditions."

The image of the warrior and martyr who is prepared to sacrifice his life for a lofty ideal is deeply ingrained in the minds of ordinary Albanians. The formula "an Albanian has to live (or build socialism) with a weapon in one hand and a pick-axe in the other" which goes back to the times of Skanderbeg is applicable to any period in the country's history and remains part of the texture of present-day Albanian life, factitious though it may seem to a foreigner. It is no accident that Ramiz Alia, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour, addressing a rally to mark the 44th anniversary of the liberation of the town of Peshkopi, spoke in the same breath about the people's contribution to the national liberation struggle, the building of socialism and the "battle for bread."

Last summer, like the summer before, Albania was hit by drought, the worst affected areas being the coastal lowlands. Great hopes were pinned on the highland areas, where harvests have been stable, if not particularly abundant. It is only in the Koritsa Valley, Albania's traditional bread basket, that wheat yields reached world standards – 5-6 tons per hectare and in some places 7.5-7.7 tons. These figures were cited in reports submitted to the CC APL, and they have enabled economists to conclude even before the final figures are in that Albania will be able to feed itself this year, as it has done every year since 1976.

Quality and quantity

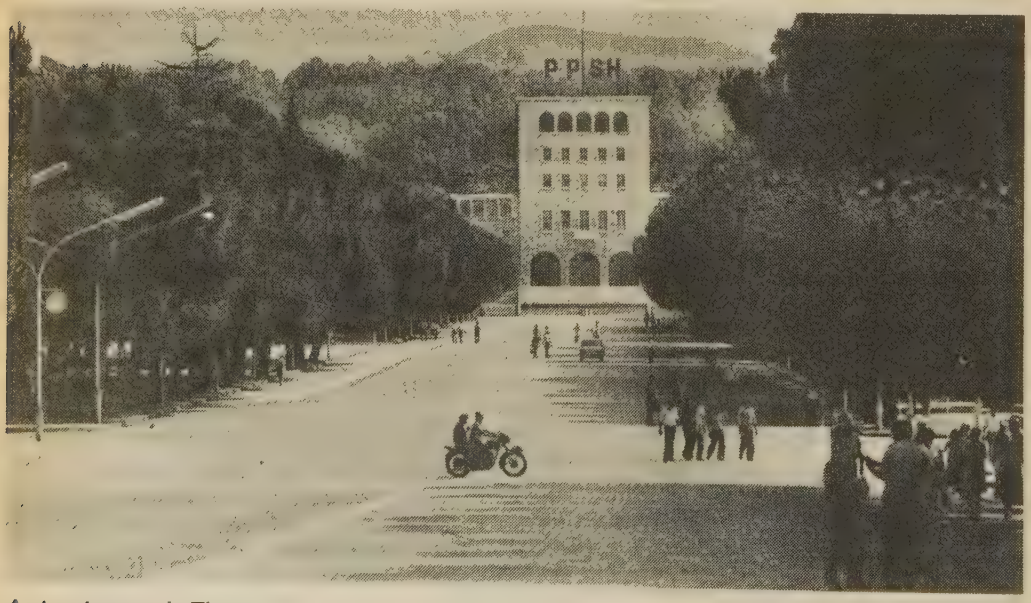
Fifty years ago, in May 1938, when fascist Italy was poised to occupy Albania, Italian Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano, who had visited Albania, began his memorandum to Mussolini with the words: "The country is rich. Really rich." But after describing what he saw there, he added: "Capable of feeding five million people, Albania today cannot feed even one million." At that time Albania's population was 1.2 million. Today it is over 3 million.

Albanians take pride in their achievements in the years of popular government. Many figures can be cited to prove this. But hard statistics fail to give an idea of how ordinary Albanians live today, how much they earn, how they spend their money and what they do in their free time. Let us try to do so from material published in the Albanian press and the accounts of people who have lived there for many years.

Like any southern city, Tirana wakes early. By our standards the city is not large, its population only 300,000. The working day begins at 7 a.m. and lasts without a lunch break till 3 p.m. There are no private cars. People go to work on foot, on bicycles, mopeds and by public transport – buses bought from France on the cheap because they have long outlived their service life.

Tirana has a low skyline. High-rises have only appeared in recent years. One of them is the 15-storey Tourist Hotel for foreign visitors. There are also four eight-storey blocks in the centre of the capital. But the occupants, especially those who live on the top floors, have a hard time of it: no lifts, no central heating, and tap water that doesn't always reach the top floors. The fuel for various makeshift stoves has to be carried on one's back. The weather in autumn and winter is damp and chilly, and when low clouds settle on top of Mt Dajti and hang over the city, which is situated in a huge bowl, the result is smog. When the sun comes out, the green fir trees, the palms in the city centre and the lawns with their blossoming roses create an illusion of eternal spring.

So far the favourable climate, which makes it possible to grow subtropical crops on the Ionian coast and to breed cattle in the lush Alpine meadows, has failed to ensure an abundance of food. Some foodstuffs have to be imported, mainly from the European socialist countriers. Broiler chickens are bought from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. An Albanian housewife opening a packet of rice is likely to discover a small slip of



A street scene in Tirana

Photo from L'Express magazine (France)

paper reading "Krasnodar Rice Packing Factory" in Russian. This despite the fact that there are no trade or diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Some foodstuffs are not openly on sale and are distributed through special shops to which every family in a neighbourhood is attached. The ration is one kilogramme of meat, 0.5 kilogramme of ewe milk cheese a week, 200 grammes of unground coffee a month, etc., per family, irrespective of its size. Bread, milk and sugar are not rationed. Sometimes beans and flour are rationed from spring until the new harvest has been brought in. Fruit and vegetables are plentiful. All food is sold in government shops, and private trade in markets is prohibited.

Officially there is no unemployment in Albania. But some enterprises employ 20 people where they could easily do with 10. Women are expected to retire at 55 and men at 60, and the rule is strictly observed. The old-age pension comes to 75 per cent of the salary. Medical care and education are free and there is no taxation. But industrial goods and household appliances are expensive.

Wages and salaries were streamlined in the late seventies to ensure greater social justice. The earnings of people in the higher income bracket should not, as a rule, be more than twice the wages of low-paid workers. The figures are respectively 800-1,200 leks for the former group and 400-600 leks for the latter. A black-and-white TV set assembled locally from imported parts costs 4,000 leks. Colour TV sets are not manufactured or imported, but some people get them as presents from relatives abroad, mostly in the U.S. Foreign goods add to the wardrobes of Albanians and are sold on the black market. Locally produced ladies' boots, including custom-made ones, cost 250-300 leks, while the black market price for imported ones is up to 700 leks.

Culture: native and "alien"

The cultural and social life of the city is not noted for its variety. It is not every day that drama and opera performances are staged in theatres. The same plays and shows run for long periods. Along with Albanian plays, foreign classics are also performed. They include Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew," Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," Pietro Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana." Sometimes the same show combines opera and ballet: for example, the third act of Puccini's "Tosca" and the second act of Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker."

Although TV sets are expensive, television is very popular in Albania. True, there is only one channel which broadcasts for four or five hours in the evening on weekdays with an extra morning programme on Sundays. In addition to the news, the Albanians can watch a half-hour programme called "Camera" covering events at home and abroad, programmes devoted to historical anniversaries, a play based on Garcia Lorca's "The Home of Bernarda Alba," Egyptian films, the English serials "David Copperfield" and "Jane Eyre," and listen to Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto, or to folk songs.

The meagre offerings of the local channel are partly made up for by the possibility of tuning in to Italian, Yugoslavian and Greek television. Albanians are past masters at making devices to circumvent the authorities' attempts to prevent the infiltration of "alien culture." Late-night Italian TV programmes are said to be particularly popular with the young.

The comparative paucity of intellectual pursuits in the afternoon contribute to the preservation of the traditional forms of communication characteristic of practically all the Balkan countries. Albanians are a highly politicized people. Every evening men gather in cafés and squares to discuss the latest news. In the afternoon one of the capital's central streets, the Boulevard of Fallen Heroes, becomes a pedestrian mall, where people engage in an activity for which they have borrowed the Italian name giro, and which in Tirana basically consists of walking round in a circle. People go out to meet friends, exchange news, to be seen with their fiancés and to make new acquaintances. The crowd moves at a leisurely pace, observing the right-hand traffic rule. Gradually the crowd thins out as people go home.

Tirana wakes up early and goes to bed early. The streets are plunged into the darkness, with the exception of a few flickering street lamps. On festive days three flood-lit monuments stand out in the darkness. They commemorate Skanderbeg, Lenin and Stalin. Some years ago the Stalin monument was moved closer to the University. Stalin retains his new place in the square and the APL's scale of ideological and political values. It is impossible to glean information about new political and social developments in the Soviet Union from the Albanian press. Occasionally one reads a brief item tucked away on the back page of the Party newspaper Zeri i Popullit, which says that the U.S.S.R. has "rehabilitated 636 enemy elements repressed during Stalin's times."

For over a quarter of a century Albania has cultivated the stereotype whereby the Stalin model is the only correct one, guaranteeing success in the building of socialism in Albania. Accordingly, Albania has a Stalin-type administrative-command system. As in the Soviet Union, it has become a brake on socio-economic progress. To this must be added the Chinese-style "leaps forward." The Albanian leadership is aware that its former line has proved ineffective and is taking some steps to overcome economic stagnation (see New Times No. 2, 1988). Nevertheless, the Soviet policy of perestroika is bitterly criticized.

One of the most popular catch phrases in today's Albania is: "There can be no import without export." Accordingly, the Party and the government seek to foster foreign economic ties. As one European diplomat who has watched Albania closely since 1965 put it, "the leaders have realized that they cannot move forward without foreign technology and trade."

Many in the West believe that the establishment of relations with the F.R.G. in 1987 heralded "a new Western policy" for Albania. Indeed, West German firms responded with enthusiasm, hoping to become Albania's main trading partners at the expense of Yugoslavia. They have been joined by politicians who play on the Albanians' nationalist feelings.

Such is Albanian life as seen from a distance. Of course, you have to be in the country and meet and talk to its people to get a complete picture of what life there is really like.

■

Mayakovsky in Paris

Extracts from Elsa Triolet's reminiscences

A Muscovite by birth, sister of Lilya Brik (one of Mayakovsky's dear ones), Elsa Triolet left Russia for France with her husband. Two letters from Gorky moved her to take up literature. Her books were published in Moscow, and soon she became the first translator of Mayakovsky's poetry into French. This is remembered and appreciated in France. Elsa Triolet introduced the French public to a number of plays by Chekhov, and contributed to the development of bilateral cultural links.

Elsa Triolet wrote her reminiscences in the 1950s for the Literary Heritage series, but conditions at the time prevented them from being published...

Vasily Katanyan
film director, Lenin Prize Laureate

I met him in Paris in November 1924. I booked him a room in a Montparnasse hotel called Istria, where I had stayed on my return from Berlin. Mayakovsky also stayed there every time he came to Paris.

Montparnasse is a district of Paris where one never fails to see houses with artists' studios. These old houses have never been repaired, so they are as dirty as dustbins. Usually there is a small neglected garden overgrown with scrub and nettles and surrounded by a dilapidated fence in front of the buildings. Artists come to these studios from all over the world to study painting. Mostly the artists are very poor, and they not only have to work but also to live in these grim, choking rooms without a vestige of comfort, warmed by an improvised iron stove. Those who are a bit better off live nearby in the numerous small hotels. But all of them can be seen in the cafés at the intersection of boulevards Montparnasse and Raspail – Le Dôme, La Rotonde, La Coupole, and others. Fame-hungry and already renowned writers, poets and musicians used to mix here with artists and Bohemians in general.

"A saying
commonly known
is that every road
leads to Rome
Not so
with the Montparnassian.
He sees it,
I'll swear,
In a different fashion:
Both Remus and Romulus,
Starting from Rome,
Would arrive
At café Rotonde or
Dôme..."

The Hotel Istria where Mayakovsky stayed looked like a tower on the inside: there was a narrow flight of stairs, five storeys with no corridors, with five single doors leading to small rooms. Each room was decorated with bright striped wallpaper, and held a double iron bed, a bedside table, a small table by the window, two chairs a mirrored wardrobe and a basin with hot running water. The floor was covered with a worn yellow patterned rug.

Volodya made himself at home in the Istria very quickly. He learned how to order breakfast by telephone and, living on the same floor as he, I often heard his deep voice roar down the receiver: "Jambon (Ham), madame..." Then he knocked at my door, and I went into his room to watch him devour the "jambon," tasteless coffee and rusks... Volodya, in his shirt-sleeves, sat sideways at a small table by the window opening onto the Campagne-Première. From time to time he would get up, go over to the bedside table on which lay an open notebook, mutter something like "Un verre de Koto donne de l'énergie..." (these words were written in huge letters on the brick wall surrounding a vacant plot on the other side of the street). In a word, he was writing poetry...

Another of Volodya's visits to Paris comes to mind. He would get off the train, my dear Volodya from Moscow, as if we had never parted... He would walk down the platform, trying to fall into step with me, sometimes stopping to look at me and say: "There is much talk in Moscow about your beauty. C'mon, show me if it's true." He would walk a little further, towering above the crowd, a gentle smile on his face, and the French would look around at his figure which was most unusual for France.

In 1924 he looked especially grim. He had spent two months in Paris without letting me leave him alone, as if fearful of unknown dangers. He was greatly irritated by not speaking French, and thus being unable to convey his verse properly to the French. Very often I saw him write letters to Moscow. When doing so, he sat on the floor with a pad on the bed, since the table was always laden with something. Volodya felt sad which, however, did not prevent us from strolling about the Paris streets and shopping in the Old England store... Our shopping routine never varied: at the Old England, Volodya used to buy shirts, socks, pyjamas, leather belts and ties, and once he bought a folding rubber shower basin. At the Innovation, he bought very special suitcases of variable capacity and different travelling items such as traveller's kits, glasses, knives, forks and spoons in a leather case – things really essential for his frequent tours of Russia. Mayakovsky adored quality, useful and reliable things, they used to gladden him like sort of discovery. Besides, I knew of his devotion to

cleanliness bordering on phobia, which could in part be explained by the fact that his father had died of blood poisoning following a pinprick. Volodya used to wash his hands like a surgeon before an operation, he soaked himself in eau de cologne, and God forbid you cut a finger in his presence! Once he made me put iodine on my hands because they were smeared with red paint from the handle of a bag.

Like Romulus and Remus we went daily to the cafés of Montparnasse. There Mayakovsky was immediately surrounded by Russians, both émigré, semi-émigré and those who were in Paris on business. The French also flocked to him, but he at once warned them that he could only communicate with them in "Triolet," that is, with my assistance. Russians never failed to be excited by the sight of him and were in the habit of always concocting a lot of nonsense about him, quite often loathsome lies.

Mayakovsky's assertiveness, energy and forceful character in defending his point of view, or something he held dear and important, however remarkable these qualities might be, were intolerable in everyday life. He was neither a petty tyrant, nor would he make a scene over domestic trifles. He was an exceptionally delicate, polite and kindly man – his demands on his near and dear ones were quite different: he needed power over their hearts and souls. In a superlative degree he possessed what the French called le sense de l'absolu – the need for absolute feeling in friendship and in love, the feeling that never fades, that knows no compromise or concessions, that goes without a hitch...

"Don't divide our love into days,
Don't change our beloved names..."

Once I said to him: "You write such words, why then are you always surrounded by women?" He rather solemnly, indignantly and sharply retorted: "I've never been unfaithful to Lilichka. Remember that – never!" Well, that was really so, but he himself demanded of women – with whom he was never unfaithful to Lilichka – that absolute feeling he was incapable of giving without betraying Lilya. No woman could hope to estrange him and Lilya. However, when he himself fell in love, and the woman he loved, acting out of a sense of self-preservation, refused to ruin her life, knowing that Mayakovsky would surely mutilate her small world and never take her along to the big world of his life, he flew into despair and rage. And when he was lucky enough to meet with such overwhelming unique feeling he fled from it.

A Don Juan crucified by love, Mayakovsky resembled a philistine image of Don Juan in the way that a pretty postcard resembles a master's painting. He did not possess the least vulgarity or ribaldry; he respected women and always tried hard not to offend them in any way, yet when he fell in love, he demanded the highest standards from the woman and her love, refusing to understand concessions or convenience...

In 1924 Mayakovsky failed to get an American visa. He left for Moscow, only to return six months later to Paris, hoping again for a world tour. This time he came by plane and later he enthusiastically related to me how the pilot bowed in mock respect by the plane's tail every time they crossed a national frontier.

This arrival, in 1925, was marred by the theft of money Mayakovsky had saved for the journey. In the afternoon we went to a bank to collect the money, and someone had been evidently spying on us. This someone was a professional thief. He rented a room at the Istria next to Volodya's, and when Volodya went out in the morning without locking the door, he crept inside, stole the wallet from the jacket and vanished into thin air.

The loss was discovered only later, but when I came as usual to Volodya's room, he was sitting quietly in his shirt-sleeves eating his "jambon." Then he stood up and as usual ran his hands down his jacket to see if everything was in place. I saw his face turn grey. The wallet! We searched the room and rushed to the hotel keeper's, then to a police station nearby...

Volodya strode along not bothering to wait for me, and I did my best not to fall behind. We walked in silence, lost in thought... The thief had left none of the money, and I was thinking hard what I could sell to make up for the loss... Volodya must have been thinking of his second infamous return to Moscow from the first stage of the world tour that would never take place. At last I told him that I could sell my fur coat and ring – all my valuable possessions. Volodya smiled, and regaining his joyful disposition, bravely said there was no need to sell anything, life would go on, we continue to dine at the Grande-Chaumière as we had done before, buy shirts and ties and have fun and he would go on his world tour come what might... This proved true later, though the police confined the investigation to questioning the hotel keeper, who described the thief as well-known to the police anyway.

Volodya cabled Moscow and Lilya managed to get some money for him from the State Publishers and remit it to Paris. I remember well how Leonid Krasin, the then Soviet plenipotentiary to France, to whom Volodya went to report the theft, not only failed to show any sympathy, but remarked almost gladly: "There's enough stupidity for every wise man." At that time many rejoiced at Volodya's woes, gloated over and laughed at them. After the theft, and aware of this

attitude to him, Volodya devised a sort of game: whenever a Russian came to Paris (they were numerous at the Exhibition of Arts and Industries), Volodya approached him, asking for a loan. We used to spot a Russian in a café, roughly estimate his material circumstances, then Volodya asked him for a loan. If the sum he got was closer to my estimate, the difference between the two estimates went to me, and vice versa. If no money was given, Mayakovsky spat, made a grimace of utter indignation and contempt and called the man names. I remember how he approached Ehrenburg who had just returned from Belgium, and was drinking his usual coffee at La Rotonde. Ehrenburg didn't seem surprised, he just indifferently handed Volodya fifty Belgian francs without bothering to ask anything. Volodya was touched and pleased – he knew that Ehrenburg was not exactly rich either. After this he started calling Eherenburg by his first name, Ilya, which he had never done before. When we left La Rotonde, Mayakovsky was very excited; rocking with silent laughter, he muttered: "Belgian francs! Look, these are Belgian francs!"

If I remember rightly, another less disastrous incident happened to Volodya at the same time. Again it was at the Istria. Mayakovsky put his brand new shoes into the corridor to be polished, and someone stole them as well. Simultaneously, a pair of shoes was stolen from the painter Marcel Duchamp who lived nearby. Duchamp's judgement was swift: "It was Jeanne who did it." Jeanne was a beautiful woman, head over heels in love with Duchamp. She had rented a room at the Istria, papered the walls with magazine clippings depicting Duchamp's profile, and started demanding every second of his life. A handsome man, Duchamp was a legendary figure who painted with mathematical precision, played chess, hated all kinds of excessive sentiment and tried hard to escape Jeanne, hiding from her. To make him stay at home, she stole and threw his only pair of shoes into the dustbin, and to avert suspicion, took Volodya's shoes as well. She herself told me about that later. Mayakovsky was so astounded by Montparnasse ways that he forgot the loss of his shoes.

* * *

Once writers-unanimists invited Mayakovsky to a breakfast in his honour. The breakfast was attended by Georges Duhamel, Jules Romains, Charles Vildrac, Luc Durtain, Marc Orlan... There was also a meeting with Marinetti in a private room of the Voisin restaurant where there were only three of us: Marinetti, Mayakovsky and myself. Unfortunately my memory fails me and I can't reconstruct the conversation that I interpreted between the two futurists (one Russian and one Italian), a Bolshevik and a fascist. I remember only how Marinetti tried to convince Mayakovsky that fascism in Italy was akin to communism in Russia and how Mayakovsky was upset by the meeting. We visited Pablo Picasso, painter Robert Delaunay, and there Mayakovsky made the acquaintance of Tristan Tzara, the dadaist poet. I remember vaguely someone's large flat, people crowding in there... Still it all eludes me like a dream.

Once Mayakovsky and I went to see my friend Fernand Léger in his studio. Later, we started to go to Léger's studio more often than anywhere in Paris, and these two robust men seemed to understand each other without words. Léger showed Volodya around Paris, took us to dances at rue de Lappe near the Place de la Bastille, where deadly fights used to flare up between jealously quarrelling pimps. Once we went to Montmartre accompanied by the surrealist poet Roger Vitrac.

...In other words, Mayakovsky met in Paris with innumerable artists, poets, painters and writers. He saw Paris itself with all its contrasts, both the glittering elegant quarters and the workers' district of Belleville, luxurious restaurants and modest taverns, museums and cathedrals...

After a time, perhaps when Volodya began meeting with Soviet diplomats, plainclothesmen started shadowing us everywhere we went. The snoopers kept noting things in tiny notebooks, and Volodya taught me the expression "to pencil someone up." "Look, Elechka, they've pencilled you up too!" We knew these snoopers by sight. One day, with a company of friends, we went to dine at the Grande-Chaumère, which was the restaurant Volodya favoured most of all (he liked to frequent this place and, as an old customer, always had a table reserved for him; he even ordered the same things there). The snoopers, an old man and a young one, made themselves comfortable at a nearby table. They looked one hundred per cent French. Mayakovsky was in high spirits, kept joking and making us rock with laughter. The snoopers sat quietly, as if they didn't understand a word, and seemed preoccupied with their beefsteaks. Then Mayakovsky started telling a story of a billiard game when the loser, a serious and respectable man, had to crawl under the table... We were sobbing with laughter. Mayakovsky spoke in a loud voice deliberately, and our neighbours started laughing a laughter that is louder than duty or career considerations. It too them a long time to compose them selves, and their cover was blown totall Even if they did "pencil us up" that ever ing, their account of Mayakovsky mus have proved interesting reading.

* * *

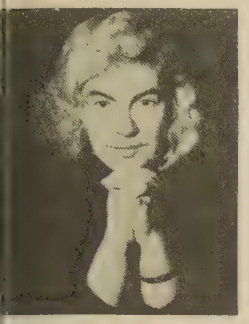
We used to go for walks and kept visit ing the fairs that travel round Paris fro one district to another. Mayakovsky like noisy fairs with their glamour, music hubbub; he liked to stare at attraction and play whatever games they had t offer; he went to shooting galleries an won bottles of cheap champagne bought lottery tickets and watched rotat ing "fortune wheels"... Night already an sorrounded by a bunch of friends, we g down to Montmartre along a narro pavement. On our way is a house with protruding signboard in the shape of wreath. Volodya throws his stick exacti into the centre of the wreath, someon takes the stick from him and tries to d the same... Immediately a game start with its simple rules evolved on the spo Volodya wins: he is a good shot and th wreath is on a level with his shoulder!

But Mayakovsky was not always s joyful... I have a fair ground photo, i which we are depicted with Valentin Khodasevich, the painter Delaunay, th poet Ivan Goll and his wife Claire... Vo odya turned his back to us. It was a ba evening! Mayakovsky was gloomy an angry. I remember what upset hin someone told him about the rumours tha had been circulating in Paris about hin They said that the Soviet poet had com to the city simply to idle away his time i cafés and pigsties, spending immens sums of money. Here you have the "h who doesn't work shall not eat" princip in earnest. It used to irritate Volodya tha all these "people of the arts" exploited th fact that he liked noisy, cheerful place that they seized on every opportunity t slander the Soviet poet, and that thi cheap demagogy found fertile soil i Paris... One should work at home in th daytime, not at night when merry-g rounds fill the air with their nois Mayakovsky couldn't stand any kind gossip and rumours and took them ver close to heart.

Whoever Mayakovsky talked to, he ir evitably started to woo the person t Russia. He always wanted to take ever body and everything to Russia. Invitin people to Russia with him was sort idée fixe. In 1923, after his first visit t Paris, his poem, "A Little Chat with th Eiffel Tower" appeared:

To my land,
Tower,
Come!
There
We
Need
You!
...
...

Account No. 700454



Tatiana Ivanova

The Memorial Society, a national voluntary association for historical truth, has been set up.You may say that so far all that has happened is that a session to prepare for an inaugural conference has been held. That's true, of course, because all the formalities have not yet been completed.

I take the liberty to say, however, that the Memorial has come into being, is functioning and recruiting ever new members. It is a voluntary association of people of good will. It is at once the good and the will in people that urge them to join the Society.

It is a national society. That is what my blue invitation card and the newspapers say - and that is true. But I am certain that the same good will will bring people into it from other countries as well, because the Memorial Society's goal is to perpetuate the memory of the victims of lawlessness that has left its imprint worldwide. The tribute of eternal memory must keep the people of the planet from repeating fatal mistakes.

More than twenty years ago the 22nd CPSU Congress voted to erect a monument to the victims of Stalin's lawlessness. The "thaw" soon gave way to a long period of stagnation, when many believed it had been no more than a pious wish. Indeed, the words "victims of repression" disappeared from the media, while the name of the "friend of children and athletes, the Father of the Peoples" had to be uttered with due veneration. Many thought that a veil of silence had been drawn on the 20th Congress and its resolution on the need to overcome the personality cult and its consequences, just as a similar veil had been drawn on the words of truth coming from this country at that time, and that all of it had been submerged under viscous official parlance and relegated to oblivion.

Some were overjoyed... Those who today grumble, gloat over our setbacks on the quiet, or fume over perestroika - depending on their temperaments... Their joy was as premature as their thriumph during the years of stagnation was ephemeral. They failed to realize that the word of truth, once it has been uttered and found a response, comes to stay.

In the post-thaw period the spirit of the Memorial Society remained very much alive and active, even though its members may never have seen or communicated with each other. What matters is that every one of them tried to put paid to Stalinism. When speaking in public, they had to resort to euphemisms, but at home they could commit to paper what they really thought. Then, every time they took up the cudgels for human dignity, reason and justice, they dealt a blow to Stalinism.

I had no difficulty in discerning in people allegiance to that association wherever my journalistic assignments took me - at collective farms and factories, research institutes or Party committees. I saw it in the eyes of the surgeon Fyodorov, Academician Maltsev, the poet Voznesensky.

I saw it in the eyes of my guerrilla friends who had been through Gestapo dungeons, the Warsaw uprising and - after the war - Stalin's camps... They had taken me to the high bank of the Vistula, the very spot from which our troops had a panoramic view of the Polish capital while the Warsaw uprising was breathing its last.

"What kind of building is that?" I would ask in Budapest, Prague, Sofia or Ulan Bator. And the answer would invariably be "Oh, that's something like your 'Lubyanka'!" The buildings were indeed very much like it, if somewhat smaller.

So many things might not have happened had collectivization not played havoc with our countryside, had there been no exiled or executed loved ones to mourn in our homes, had our fathers and grandfathers not lived in fear of each other, had there been trust and love amongst them, had the highest echelon of the Red Army not been liquidated... The Second World War might not have lasted so long. It might not have been a world war. Or there might have been no war at all.

The other day a student at the Moscow Institute for Historian Archivists appeared on TV. For many years, quite a young man working entirely on his own, he has been compiling a card index of the victims of Stalinism. It now runs into over 100,000 names. His own family has not been directly affected, he said. What then prompted him to undertake this work? I think it was the compassion and civic consciousness that many share, the good and the will in him.

Books by our writers and poets which our magazines have begun to publish only recently are also part of the Memorial Society.

Only twelve months ago collecting of signatures in support of the association might have landed the campaigners in police custody. Today the Society exists and this is a victory for perestroika.

The fight for glasnost, that is, for genuine democracy and freedom, is being waged by those who have accumulated knowledge and developed their minds and abilities for the sake of the Memorial Society. If we succeed in making our country humane and free in the full sense of the word, ours will be a better world to live in. We are already finding the atmosphere less stifling, with perestroika just taking its first strides. Shall we be able to carry it through? We must. It is our duty to the past and the future. The good and the will that exist in the world are an earnest of our success. I see it in your eyes, reader, that you are also a Memorial Society member at heart. Let's shake hands then!

"Help the Memorial Society!" the poet Evgeny Yevtushenko appealed to readers of Literaturnaya Gazeta. How can I best raise my feeble female voice in support of this appeal?

The author has requested that her fee be remitted to Account 700454 opened at the U.S.S.R. Civil Construction Bank (Zhilsotsbank) to fund the erection of a monument to the victims of Stalinism.

Theatre-goers in Moscow, Leningrad, and Tbilisi recently saw the musical "Sophisticated Ladies," which has been running successfully on Broadway for almost a decade. It is the first Soviet-American production to tour the world.

Mary D'Arcy stars in the production, which is based on the music of Duke Ellington, the greatest jazz musician of our time. Mary says that his personality and talent have always been a source of inspiration for her and the company. She always has a small portrait of Duke Ellington with her wherever she goes.

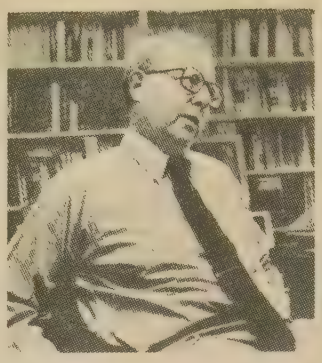
Her stage career began after she won a beauty contest in 1979 and became Miss America.

"The programme of the contest," she recalls, "included not only modelling, but also debates with the audience, judges and members of the press. I have always been fond of singing and dancing and I suppose I had the makings of a winner. I was lucky, I got money and an education and used all this to fulfil my cherished dream and become an actress."

Mary made her debut in 1971 in New York in the musical "The Musician." She went on to Broadway and television.

* * *

"I have been around under 10 directors of the Central Intelligence Agency, going back to Allen Dulles," says **David Wise,** who co-authored a best-selling book on the CIA with Thomas Ross. The book, published in 1964, is entitled "The Invisible Government." It has been translated into many languages. It gives accounts of such infamous actions of the CIA as attempts at invading Cuba (1961) and the coup in Iran (1953).



David Wise's first book "The U-2 Affair," was about the American reconnaissance plane shot down over Soviet territory.

"At that time the CIA was plotting to assassinate the Cuban President Fidel Castro and overthrow hostile governments, but hardly anyone knew it existed," says David Wise. In 1964, top CIA officials tried to prevent the publication of "The Invisible Government"

Founders of new society

Alexander Levenbuk is known to many in this country from the popular radio programme Radionyanya. Recently he became art director of the Moscow Jewish Drama Company Shalom, formed last October. Shalom is the Hebrew for "Peace to all!"

The company has just been formed, although it got together 25 years ago. In 1962 the Jewish Drama Ensemble was formed at the Moscow Concert Association by actors from the State Jewish Theatre, which was closed down in 1949 after the murder of its director Solomon Mikhoels in January 1948. In the late 1940s and early 1950s many outstanding representatives of Soviet Jewish culture fell victim to repressions, and Jewish schools, theatres, and newspapers were closed down. Few can read and write in their national languages now and traditions and customs are gradually being forgotten.

Alexander Levenbuk says that the company has its own premises, small as it is, at the Luch cinema/concert hall. They run it on a self-financing basis, which creates problems sometimes, but enables them to be creatively independent. The company has made plans to go on a series of tours.

Alexander Levenbuk is also a founding member of the Jewish Cultural Society created in cooperation with Shalom.

The president of the Jewish Cultural Society is **Lev Shapiro,** a member of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet.

Lev Shapiro was born in 1927. In 1949 he went to Komsomolsk-on-Amur in the Far East, where he worked for 21 years at a smelting factory. In 1970 he was elected first secretary of the territorial Communist Party committee of the Jewish Autonomous Region. He retained that post until his retirement. Last year he moved to Moscow, and has continued his active social work.

According to the charter of the society, any Soviet citizen, regardless of nationality, can

be a member. The soci provides opportunities study Yiddish and Hebrew well as Jewish literature, and history. It will orgar meetings with promin Soviet Jewish cultural figu and round-table discussi with artists, authors, act journalists and politicia The society is also plann to set up a museum devo to Jewish culture and c toms.

Lev Shapiro says that tially members of the Shal Drama Company will doing all the organizatic work, but when the soc expands its membership will become independent.

The society will cooperating with the Natic and Moscow Culture foun tions, the Children's Fu and the Memorial moveme

Yelena Gorbun

y offering to buy the whole dition.

David Wise is 58, and the by thriller is his favourite enre. In his latest book, "The py Who Got Away," he fol- wed John le Carré in trying to raw a psychological portrait f a defecting secret agent.

He says that at present the ublic is much more aware at the CIA exists. Under the reedom of Information Act he as even able to write a re- uest and obtain his own sev- ral inch-thick file from the ecret service. But those are uperficial changes, David Vise says, most of the time ou can't see what the CIA oes.

* * *

Christina Onassis, the last dult member of the famous reek family of shipowners, d on November 19 in rgentina.

Her three-year-old daughter **hina Onassis** is sole heir to he fabulous Onassis fortune. guardian is to be appointed look after her interests and t the age of 18 she will be- ome eligible for the inheri- ance and take over as presi-

dent of the charitable Onassis Foundation.

Christina Onassis died at the age of 37, and will be buried in the family vault on the Aegean island of Skorpios, which is owned by the family. It was rumoured in Athens that she committed suicide, but a spokesman for the family dismissed this and said she died of a heart attack. The post mortem showed, however, that she died of a lung condition.

Her stormy private life very often made headlines. She was married four times, and one of her husbands, Sergei Kauzov, is a former member of the staff of the Soviet Merchant Marine office in Athens. Her daugher is the child of her latest husband, French businessman Thierry Roussel.

* * *

Japanese geishas are quite different from what lovers of oriental exotic imagine them to be. Geishas are by no means ladies of easy virtue. Of course, it is their job to entertain guests, but to entertain them with intelligent conversation, music, poetry improvizations, and calligraphy. **Asaji Anagibashi,** 94, is still

very welcome at private parties at Tokyo restaurants specializing in the national cuisine.

She was taught to dance, sing, and play the shamisen, the three-stringed folk instrument, at the age of 12. She became a fully fledged geisha six years later, in 1912.

The number of geishas in today's Japan is declining, because a geisha is supposed to excel at many skills, which takes a lot of training. Young girls opt for less demanding occupations.

Asaji Anagibashi does not look her age. She says that mixing with people all the time has helped her to handle old age. At present she accepts only two invitations a week.

* * *

Before he became an actor, **Victor Avilov** worked for eight years as a driver.

His life changed dramatically after he decided to go on the stage. Now he leads in the productions by the Moscow youth drama company Na Yugo-Zapade as Hamlet and Lancelot.

Recently he starred in Oleg Teptsov and Yuri Arabov's film "Mister Decorator," and the reviews of his debut in the movies were very good.

Victor has just finished working on screen version of Alexander Dumas' novel "The Count of Monte Cristo" directed by Gennady Yungvald-Khilkevich. He stars as Edmond Dantes in the film "The Prisoner of Iff Castle."

A. Sukhovo-Kobylin's trilogy has recently been staged in the youth drama company Na Yugo-Zapade where Victor Avilov stars as Varravine.

* * *

A minister for women

Rita Süssmuth has be- me the Bundestag's new airman. Before that she held e post of Federal Minister for outh, Family, Women and ealth Affairs. A former pro- ssor of pedagogics at ortmund University, she ined the Christian Democra- c Union in 1981, and in Sep- mber 1985 she was ap- inted to a cabinet post at e initiative of Chancellor ohl. In the popularity polls e is well ahead of other hristian Democratic politi- ans, including the Federal hancellor himself.

A lady of considerable drive nd initiative, she is an ar-

chitect of a well-balanced policy with regard to AIDS and drug abuse, and that secured her considerable support from practically all political forces in the country. Short of pursuing feminist policies, she built her political platform on the CDU/CSU-FDP cabinet on the basis of women's affairs, and described herself as a minister for women.

In the opinion of observers, Chancellor Kohl's move to appoint her to her present post again has effectively neutralized a dangerous rival and suppressed the row that had broken out following a scandalous statement in the Bundestag by her predecessor Dr Philipp Jenninger.

A. Sambuk

The price of "victory"

How Lysenkoism affected our country's international standing and the emerging anti-war movement in the West

Paradoxically enough, the "historic victory" of the supporters of Trofim Lysenko at the notorious session of the All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences, VASKHNIL, held between July 31 and August 7, 1948 remained unknown to the general public for some time. The newspapers did not report it. Only one sentence from the published address of participants in the session to Joseph Stalin could give a clue to a discerning reader. "The Michurinist school of biology," the address said, "will persevere in creatively extending Darwinism and in resolutely and unswervingly exposing the reactionary-idealistic Weismanist-Morganist scholastic aberration divorced from practice, combat kowtowing to bourgeois science unworthy of Soviet scholars, and emancipate researchers from the vestiges of metaphysical and idealistic notions."

That sentence, however, did not alert foreign journalists and the British public learnt about Lysenko's victory over geneticists only on August 28 when the Times carried a report that acad. Leon Orbeli was removed from the post of secretary of the biological sciences department of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences and "leading geneticists have been removed from responsible posts in other biological institutes, which are now revising their scientific plans."

Since the general public in Britain were hardly aware of who Orbeli was and what genetics is all about the report was addressed above all to the British scientific community, which was going through a crisis at the time. The bonds of traditional corporate cohesion that enabled the scientists to stand united in the face of political dilemmas arising from current trends and thereby influence political life in the country were in jeopardy. The cold war had already begun and the scientific community could not avoid polarization as divisions began to emerge.

The respective positions of left- and right-wing scientists were evidently preordained, although that division is incomplete as is any classification. The Liberals had the key-role at the time, because many world-acclaimed scientists were in their ranks. Liberal circles voiced their opposition to many aspects of the government's policies. By that time Britain had already decided to follow the example of the United States and acquire its own nuclear weapons. The army demanded sophisticated weapons. Most Liberal scientists, however, saw no need for nuclear projects in Britain. They sharply criticized the desire of the then US administration to retain the nuclear monopoly. In the circumstances conditions were ripe for an active participation of British scientists in the international movement for peace against the nuclear menace. Scientists with left or liberal leanings could have taken joint or parallel action in support of the nascent movement...

The "victory" of Lysenko and his associates at the session of the Agricultural Academy and the "endorsement" of its results at an expanded session of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences at the end of August made everything clear.

The notions to which Lysenko subscribed had no following among British scientists who were certain of the merits of genetic theory. Even the prominent biologist Dr James Fyfe who accepted the basic messages of official Soviet propaganda without much questioning was for a long time skeptical about the "theory of phased development." A prominent journalist, member of the Communist Party of Britain John Lewis acknowledged in 1947 that public opinion in the British scholarly community was against Lysenko. He merely recommended an impartial analysis of the theory of the head of the Soviet "Michurinist" school and was opposed to rejecting it out of hand. John Lews categorically rejected the involvement of the president of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences in the arrest and death of Dr Nikolai Vavilov. Lysenko had only one staunch supporter among the British intellectual elite. He was George Bernard Shaw. The famous dramatist believed that Lysenko had a vague idea of his own philosophical views and considered himself a follower of Marxian dialectics by mistake, whereas just as Shaw he was a vitalist one hundred per cent.

In 1948 a drive got under way in Britain to clear the civil service of "suspect foreigners" and people with left-wing leanings. The scientific community and above all the Liberals were angry with political discrimination and protested, but a mere several months after the "purge" in Britain had ended British scientists learnt that in the Soviet Union as well the government could take it upon itself to crudely interfere in scientific affairs for political reasons.

It is now absolutely clear that the attack on geneticists was given the go ahead for purely pragmatic reasons. Lysenko did promise, after all, that after the victory of the Michurinist school there would be an unprecedented increase in production on the farms. But having secured official support the opponents of Mendel and Morgan hastened to strengthen their hand with philosophical charges. Reflecting the views of his associates academician Mark Mitin described genetics as a "certain bourgeois trend in biology." That weird definition was endorsed by the Academy of Sciences. Science was divided into "true science" and "reactionary-idealistic" science, the latter being ascribed to the West. British scientists were probably surprised to learn that biology is divided into "socialist" and "bourgeois." The message was clear enough: if you support socialism you must support the Michurinist school in its battle with geneticists and if you support Lysenko, you support socialism.

It was only to be expected that most British scientists found this quite unacceptable. In protest against Lysenkoism the prominent biologist Henry Dale resigned as a foreign member of the U.S.S.R. Academy and became a critic of socialism. The Royal Society broke off all ties with the Academy of Sciences. Another prominent biologist Julian Huxley, who had a friendly attitude toward the

oviet Union for a long time resolutely otested against the "official condemtion of scientific results on other than ientific grounds." His stand, supported by many Liberals, was against e politization of science. In the circmstances it amounted to a withawal from an alliance with the left ng.

The all-out attack on genetics in the S.S.R. brought confusion into the left ng. James Fyfe was the only one no unconditionally supported the desions of the session of the Academy Agricultural Sciences and declared at he had been wrong when he opsed Lysenko's ideas. He was obvisly labouring under a misapprehenon, though. Having no accurate inforation about what had actually happened he assumed that "the chief tac which Soviet communists used was e stimulation of controversy. This en controversy inevitably resulted in e victory of Michurinism... From start to finish it was essentially a democratic process, in which the important decisions were made by biologists and agriculturists themselves."

On the other hand, an old friend of the Soviet Union and outstanding biologist, foreign member of the U.S.S.R. Academy John Haldane continued to reject the theory of phased development even after the session of the Soviet Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

In spite of pressure from his political associates, by that time John Haldane had been a member of the Communist Party of Britain for 11 years, the scientist continued to defend genetics in the British Communist press. He came under growing pressure from the right wing as well. Having taken up the guideline laid by the session of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences some journalists and scientists began to maintain that it is impossible to be a Communist and scholar at the same time. Dr Haldane was finding himself in growing isolation and eventually he withdrew from the Communist Party of Britain.

likolai Vavilov was accused of "advocating bourgeois trends in biology." is British colleagues were unaware of what this label was fraught with.

The growing divisions among the potential allies in the struggle against the militarization of science were expertly used by the right wing who set up the Society for Freedom in Science. The drive against the politization of science on the part of the society degenerated into attacks on scientists participating in the democratic anti-war movement. Members of the society said that if state support is the criterion for research, as was the case in the U.S.S.R., it was not necessary to put every hypothesis through an experimental test, it would suffice to leave it to political authority to pass final judgement on all discussions.

The British government of the day also took advantage of the implications of the session of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, concerned as it was more with problems related to nuclear studies, rather than the scientific truth. Britain was eager to go nuclear. Many decent scientists rejected the atom bomb as soon as it appeared. Quite a few of them were calling for international control, albeit limited, over nuclear weaponry. The movement was gathering momentum in Western Europe and the United States.

The Atomic Scientists' Association set up in 1946 was calling for the introduction of limited international control over nuclear weapons. It supported the idea of international exchanges of information as a factor for the promotion of science. The association protested angrily against the official banning of exchanges of information. Significantly, following the sentencing of the British scientist Alan Nunn May in 1946 to ten years in jail for "nuclear espionage for the U.S.S.R." a number of scientists called on the government to give him a more lenient sentence, because they said, constant exchanges of information were the basis of science.

The session of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences in 1948 enabled the government and the right wing of the academic community to neutralize or weaken the positions of progressive scientists. In October 1948 Henry Dale told a conference of the association that he favoured an end to all contacts between British and Soviet scientists referring to the attack on genetics in the U.S.S.R. Commenting on the situation the historian Greta Jones said that the problem of Lysenko "became one more issue dividing scientists and putting the right on the attack, the left on the defensive and demoralizing the liberal middle of the political spectrum."

The alliance of the left wing and Liberals never came to pass and the anti-war movement failed to gather sufficient momentum to seriously influence government policies.

Vladimir Razuvayev

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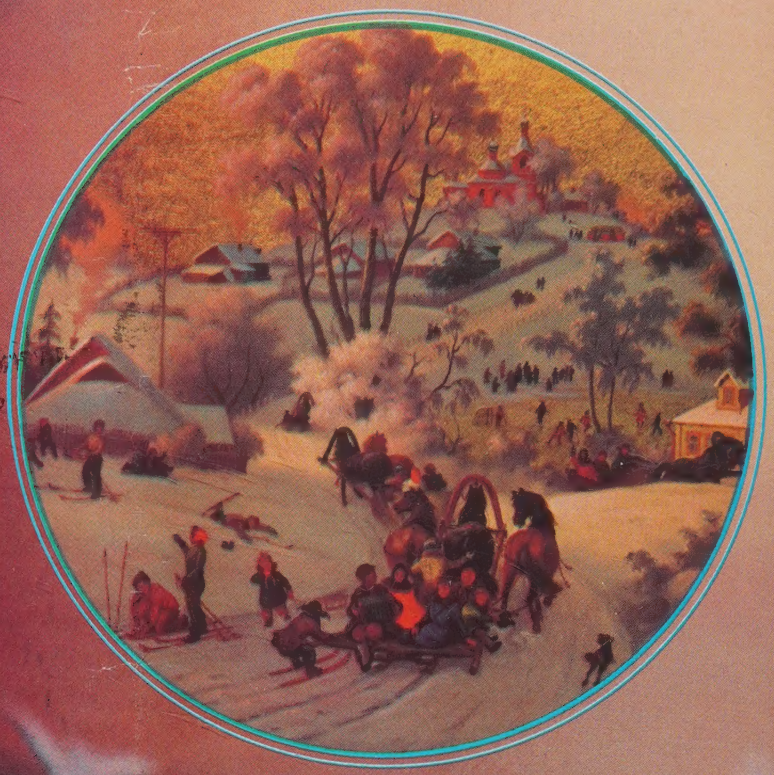

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